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ISSUE 609

May 2022



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WELCOME

ISSUE 609

MAY 2022

Surely the biggest development in sea angling over recent decades has been the revolution in 'lure' angling? Many of you, like me, will be old enough to remember when it was called 'spinning' and fish were caught on Dexter Wedges or the good old flying condom, both of which, incidentally, still catch fish as well as they did back then. Fast forward to today though and the variety of lures now on offer is bewildering, and verging on being intimidating, for those new to the sport: hard lures, soft plastics, shallow runners, weedless lures, poppers, drop shot lures, LRF and HRF. Where on earth do you begin, particularly when many of these beautifully crafted pieces of art from Japan or the United States might set you back £20 a pop? While we might think we are at the cutting edge of lure fishing it only takes a visit to one of the lure angling shows in France or Japan to see that the UK is consistently about 10 years behind the curve, so it's exciting, to think what the next decade might bring for the UK lure fishing revolution. Whatever it is, Sea Angler will be bringing it too you first, as we have been doing for the last 50 years.

This month's issue is very much focused around providing those of you with solid lure fishing skills with the opportunity to learn even more and be better prepared, and those of you new to it to know how, and where, to get started. Henry Gilbey shares his expertise on all things lure related by offering tips on being as prepared as possible to catch your bass of a lifetime in 2022 (page eight).

Don't miss Sea Angler reader, Steve Baxter's story of his first foray into night lure fishing on page 50. Steve's interest was piqued after reading something about lure fishing at night in a previous issue of Sea Angler and his success has inspired him to get more into lure fishing. I very much hope it inspires you to get out there too, whether it's in the middle of the night or not!

Joe Walker gives you five compelling reasons to give saltwater fly fishing, or 'swiffing', a try on page 52. It has certainly convinced me to dig out my fly rod

which has gone unused for the last three years.

Our small boat fishing guru, Dave Lewis, provides some expert advice on lure fishing afloat in shallow inshore waters (page 70) while our expert friends at the Bass Anglers Sportfishing Society have produced a must-read rough guide to hard lures (page 118) giving you a short cut to proven bass catching lures from some of the UK's most successful bass lure anglers.

We've also got some great lure fishing gear on review (page 98) and a first look at some of the best new lure fishing gear hitting the shops this month (page 96).

Don't miss our fantastic reader offer this month either. We are offering you the chance to get an LRF package for just £39.99, saving over £70 on the normal retail price.

Also this month, Mike Thrussell shows you how to locate and target plump early summer estuary plaice (page 14), Chris Kennedy tells the story of a night time tope hunting session and perhaps the second only recorded landing of a shore-caught tope on Sark (page 20) and we explain why blanking is an essential part of becoming a more successful angler. Continuing our 50th anniversary celebration Mike Millman deep-dives into the record books once more and surfaces with some truly extraordinary tales from over the decades. You'll also find all our usual expert answers to your questions in Sea School and another seven great fishing venues to try in May from the Channel, the Irish Sea and the North Sea coasts. Thanks to everyone who has submitted their Mission Accomplished catch photos. Please keep them coming. We have some great new prizes from Okuma on offer for the winners each month. Target hitters can be found on the Sea Angler website along with the winner of last month's competition.

If you haven't already, why not take out a subscription to Sea Angler and make sure you receive every copy straight to your letterbox? Go to page 107 to subscribe today and save 30 per cent off the shop price, plus receive a free 30l Tronixpro dry bag.

I'm off to dust down my swiffing gear. Tight lines!

'David

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Engulfed by a wave – an occupational hazard for lure anglers fishing in the surf




THE BIG PICTURE

SeaAngler



TAKE NO CHANCES

Give yourself the best chance of landing that bass of a lifetime



My youngest daughter is obsessed with distance running. She trains religiously so that when the opportunity arises in a race she is in a good position to try and break her Personal Best (PB) time for certain distances. A PB is a PB for a reason, and it's therefore not easy to beat it. However, by training hard and running the best she can, she is giving herself every chance to do so. Plenty of variables, such as the course, the weather, the conditions and other factors will all affect her ability to do so. It's all about being as well prepared as possible to better her times when the situation arises. I would suggest that fishing shares much of this DNA.

I don't remotely class myself as a specimen hunter these days, but I do obsess about making sure I am as well prepared as possible for if, or when, that bass of a lifetime inhales my lure. The thing with fishing is that the fish themselves are a big variable which might not even turn up. In spite of that, a lot of thought and effort goes into my preparations to maximise my chances of landing (and then releasing) my PB bass if it comes along. For sure, there are then a number of other factors

which dictate whether we land that fish of a lifetime, if we ever get to hook it, but that's fishing. What I don't want to be doing is beating myself up for losing a really good fish because I didn't prepare properly.

GET YOUR HEAD RIGHT

As with running (which I don't do myself!), I happen to believe that successful fishing is a lot to do with confidence. We can't bend nature to our will and force a big bass to smash our lure, but we can go fishing in a positive frame of mind because we are confident about the location, the conditions and the timings. We compute loads of factors to come up with a solution on where to go and when. This in turn should make us feel confident that, literally, at any moment a really good fish might hit you. I also want to be as confident in the choices I make about the 'where' and the 'when' as I am in my rod, reel, mainline, knots, lures, waders and sunglasses. Confidence breeds success in fishing, and even when I get 'skunked' I can learn something from the experience. ►

HAVE FAITH

I don't worry about whether my lure rod can cope with the bass I (hopefully) might hook. I firmly believe that any of the lure rods we are likely to use are perfectly capable of landing any bass we might hook. I also think that bass aren't dirty fighters, like wrasse, but over the sort of ground we often fish there is, of course, the risk of tight braid snapping over sharp rocks and other mishaps. This, though, is the fishing rather than the power of the fish, and as much as I love our bass above all other fish, in the grand scheme of things they are not that big or powerful. Our rods can cope with them just fine if something else doesn't go wrong. I am of the opinion that 99 per cent of UK and Irish anglers could fight 99 per cent of their bass 99 per cent harder than they currently do. For some reason I don't quite understand, we will happily cast lures and baits without worrying about our rods snapping, but the moment most anglers hook a fish they are instantly worrying about putting too much pressure on and losing it. The exact opposite is where my head is at.

The one issue with lure fishing rods that you need to keep a close eye on is the guides. Many times I have seen anglers suddenly breaking off and they immediately blame their braid, but have a really good study of the liners of all the guides and I bet you any money there's a crack somewhere which in turn lacerates your braid. It most commonly happens on the liner of the tip guide. So do yourself a serious favour before the bass season kicks off and really go to town


Check for even the tiniest cracks in your rod guides



Check and replace split rings and hooks



Confidence breeds success in fishing, and even when I get 'skunked' I can learn something from the experience



on checking all the guides on your rods. Visually works okay, but I like to get some old braid, wrap it around my hands, and then run it around the inside of the guides while concentrating on any hint of 'catching' – this could well be a minute little crack or chip catching the braid. Replace the guide if needs be. You do not want to be connected to a fish of a lifetime with a nice tight mainline which then runs over one of these cracks.

SHOW SOME LOVE

Let's work on the assumption here that you didn't simply sling your favourite spinning reel in the corner of the shed after your last bass fishing trip of the season! You obviously washed it down and oiled it up, and perhaps you even sent it off for a full service as well. Can we assume then that your reel is running just fine? The one thing that I keep a close eye on is the line roller assembly, mainly because in my mind this is the one part of a spinning reel which is most prone to saltwater damage with how braid is literally 'spitting' saltwater all over and into it all the time on the retrieve. As with cracks in your rod guides causing your braid to snap, so can a line roller bearing which has seized up due to rust. The moment I hear any kind of "rasping" sound from the line roller assembly I will take it apart, pack it full of Penn Precision Fishing Grease, put it back together, wipe off any excess grease, and then make sure the line roller is moving freely and quietly by running some string back and forth across it. ►

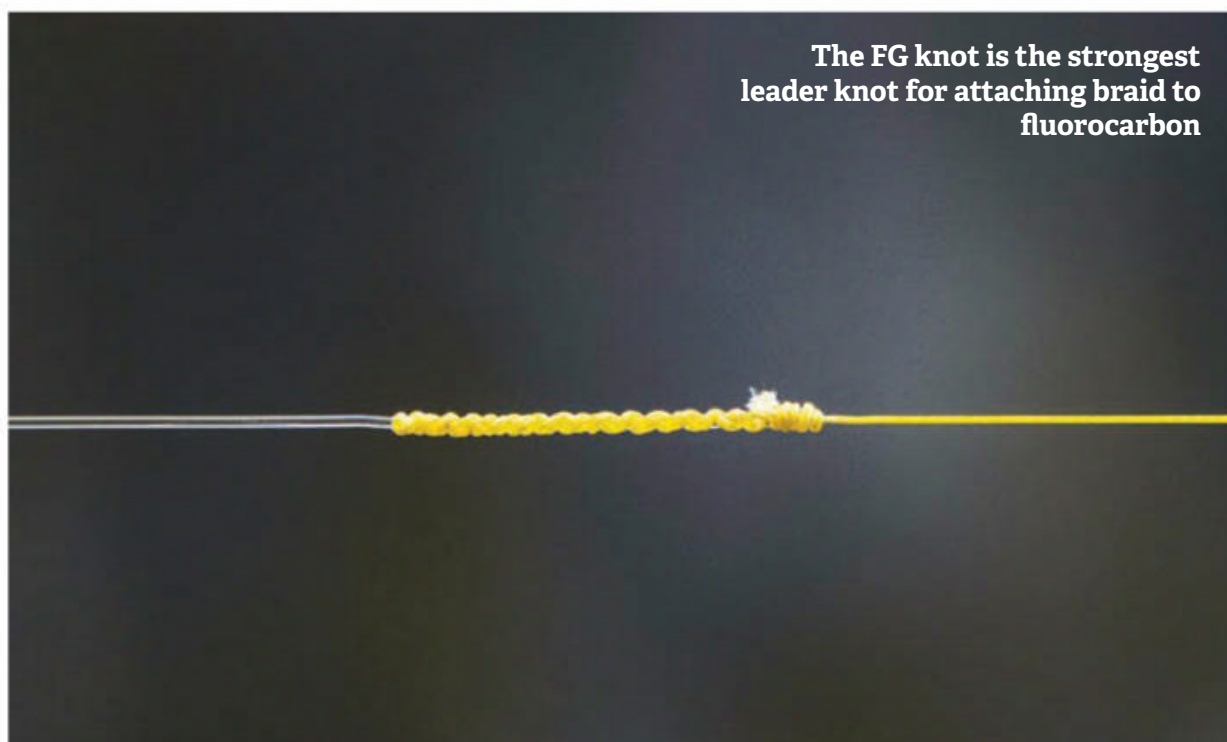
Confidence breeds success in angling and being properly prepared is part of that



Take no chances of losing what could be your bass of a lifetime this season

NEW BRAID?

If 'where fish might be' and 'when they might feed' are the most important factors in any saltwater fishing, then surely the connection between you and a hooked fish is right up there as well? Modern braids make for incredible main lines for lure fishing, but that connection can and will fail if you don't keep a close eye on any nicks and abrasions. Any doubts at all about my mainline as a whole and I will change to a new spool of braid. Also bear in mind that if I have no worries then I fully expect to get way more than a full season from a single 150m spool of braid – and even then I am inclined to reverse it when I am spending as much as I am to fish with the truly outstanding Sufix 131 braid. A seriously good 150m spool of 8-strand braid can easily be found for well under £20 these days. But with the Sufix 131 it's lasting so long for me that I am prepared to pay the extra.



The FG knot is the strongest leader knot for attaching braid to fluorocarbon



Neither of the 10lb plus bass I have caught from the shore took any line off me because all my preparation work gave me absolute faith in what I was doing

when the fish is close. Neither of the 10lb plus bass I have caught from the shore took any line off me because all my preparation work gave me absolute faith in what I was doing. I pulled them so hard they seemed to get disorientated and came in very quickly, which in turn meant that I had some very lively fish which swam away strongly after a few photos.

ANYTHING ELSE?

It is vital to replace any hooks and split rings which don't look 100 per cent right. I'd also be inclined to start the season with a fresh spool of leader material, particularly if your last one spent

any time in the sun. Have a close look at your wading boots for any missing studs or running repairs you might need to do, and it wouldn't hurt to put your breathable chest waders on and either sit in the bath or wade out somewhere calm to see if there are any leaks. If you wear an auto-inflate lifejacket out on the rocks then you can take it along to any RNLI station and somebody there will gladly take a look at it and run you through how to service it. This is vitally important. Above all though is the sheer enjoyment at getting back out there, but at the end of the day we want to try and land what we hook so let's combine joy with preparation. The end result could be one of those lifetime memories. ■

ONLY ONE LEADER KNOT

I am one of those bass anglers who always uses a fluorocarbon leader, but you might not and that's just fine. If you do use a leader then you want to be checking it constantly; the business end which is closest to the rocks is where you will find the most wear and tear. There are all sorts of leader knots you could use to attach braid to fluoro, but I can see no point in tying anything but the best knot, and the best I know of is the FG knot. It's much stronger than an Improved Albright or Uni to Uni and, although I did say earlier that bass aren't exactly the most powerful fish on earth, I am spending good money on braid and I want to get the most out of it, so I use the strongest possible knot to connect to my leader. Why wouldn't I? When I hook that bass of a lifetime, which I have been lucky enough to do so a couple of times now, I don't want to be worrying for a second about my leader knot





THE PERFECT PLAICE

Tasty plaice arrive inshore in spring after spawning and are now fattening up and in prime condition. Mike Thrussell explains how to find, and then target, them in estuaries

We all get excited when the first plaice appear, usually in February and March. They are the first real evidence that spring is getting close.

The truth is though, these fish are fresh back inshore after a rigorous spawning season and in relatively thin condition. It takes a couple of months of feeding before the plaice start really fattening up and getting back towards their prime, from May onwards.

One of the first habitats to produce well-conditioned plaice are the smaller estuaries that litter the Welsh coast, especially North and Mid-Wales. These estuaries vary in size from small ones, just a hundred yards or so wide, to major waterways like the Dee Estuary. They all have one thing in common; their shallow, sandy, muddy banks heat up quickly in the spring sun encouraging an explosion of food from March onwards which allow the plaice to build up their condition more quickly.

HABITAT

Luckily for us, plaice are predictable in the habitat they prefer when resident in estuaries. Though tolerant of a little freshwater influx, they do not like acidic water and will be within close proximity to the open sea where salinity levels remain higher. It's hard to put a specific marker down for this, but if you work on them being no further inland than the main holding grounds of peeler crab, you won't go far wrong.

The smaller estuaries often have the commonality of seed mussel and adult mussel beds right at the head of the estuary where the main channel reaches the estuary bar area and then the open sea. The mussel beds, due to the tide influences, often feature a mix of mussel beds and sandy patches. The plaice take up residency on the sand patches and move out to feed on the seed mussel as the tide floods in. Such areas can usually be reached on the bigger spring tides at low water.

The main channel of the outer estuary might produce the odd plaice from its shallow sandy sides, but this is too hit and miss to be predictable fishing. Plaice are a lazy fish and don't like to work too hard for their food. Their shape dictates they sit in the sand, half buried, with their eyes peeping out and are ever observant for passing food brought to them by the tide.

As we come deeper into the estuary proper, plaice seek scoured-out deeper holes in the main channel. These tend to occur where the channel gets naturally narrowed, forcing the tide through faster. This feature starts typically as a flattish area of sandy channel seabed then a sudden steep drop-off, or shelf, that leads into a deep hole. These also sometimes occur on wide bends in the channel where the tide is forced around the corner at speed and back eddies on itself, digging out a shelf or hole. The plaice sit on the rising seaward, or flood tide, rise of this deeper hole, or, in shallower estuaries, in the centre of the hole. This is where the food gets washed into them, ►



so it's a natural holding and feeding area. In the larger estuaries with a wide main channel, again, try to locate areas where the channel deepens like corners and changes in direction, with the area where the tide flow hits likely to be the deepest. You'll also find the plaice tend to sit tight to the estuary flanks in the deeper channels, especially if the banks are covered in weed and boulders which will naturally hold crab. Areas to avoid are where freshwater streams flow into the channel, or where a series of smaller side creeks flow in off saltmarsh and carry land drainage. This water will be too acidic for the plaice to be comfortable.

This bodes the question; what happens when the estuary is carrying flood water? Simply, the plaice go off the feed. Even if the water is chocolate coloured, they'll stay in the deeper holes, but just don't seem to feed. Once the water clears and the acidity level drops, they'll resume feeding.

TIDES

When fishing the outer main channel towards the junction with the sea, the bigger spring tides give you better access to the seed mussel beds. Fishing from dead low water and fishing the mussel and sand for as long as you can until pushed out of range, will

Look for mussel beds where plaice will be feeding



Plaice will feed during settled weather and calm seas



A brace of summer estuary plaice



see you in with a very good chance of fish. The plaice will even feed in shallow clear water at this time, and a depth of just 2ft to 3ft is enough. You'll also notice that some plaice are dark coloured as they've been feeding over the mussel, with others pale coloured for better camouflage when on the sand.

When you're fishing the inner estuary channel into the holes the smaller tides with less flow give more consistent fishing. The holes can fish just after low water, but the better feeding tends to be in the middle hours of the flood, which no doubt coincides with the bulk of any food being washed into the holding holes. If plaice need to work the channel flanks, then they do this on the flood tide but once the flow eases towards high water, they'll head back out deeper. It's rare to find an estuary mark that will produce on an ebbing outward tide. Maybe around the seed mussel beds, but again, don't bank on that.

WEATHER

Fishing the seed mussel beds, then look for settled weather and calm seas, with steady high pressure. Plaice don't like dropping pressure and rapid swings. Sunlight will produce but if there's a choice, pick a day with light cloud cover. This gets the fish moving more than gin clear seas and bright sunlight.



Combinations of beads can be effective



Luminous weights can attract plaice too

Inside the deeper holes, it's less critical. Settled weather remains best, but general light rain, even windy conditions will produce fish providing the water stays relatively clear. Having said that, the best conditions are, again, high pressure and settled seas with a light cloud cover. Early and late in the season (May and then October), or a period of cold winds, especially from the east or north, will slow the fishing. More important is the amount of colder flood water that is more likely to push them out of the smaller estuaries. The fish will stay later well into November in the bigger, deeper, estuaries such as the Dee.

TACKLE

You may need to employ long range casting to reach the seed mussel beds when fishing the mouths of smaller estuaries and this will mean choosing a longer 14ft European-style rod rated to cast 6oz (170g) and an 8000 sized fixed spool loaded with 30lb braid and an 80lb braid shock leader. Alternatively, a 12ft to 13ft standard beachcaster rated 4 to 6oz with a PENN 525MAG reel, or similar, loaded with 18lb mono and a 60lb shock leader. ►



If you can fish lighter, say rods in the 14ft length but rated to 120g with a finer tip section, a 6000 or 7000 reel loaded with 20lb braid and a 50lb braid leader give better bite detection. Many inner estuary marks can easily be fished with a standard 11ft 6in bass rod casting 3oz and bait. If the fish are under the rod tip, consider a 10ft spinning rod, a 3500 or 4000 fixed spool and 20lb braid when casting distance is minimal. You're governed more by how much lead weight is required to hold in the tidal flow, so let that be the tackle judge.

RIGS

When it comes to rigs, an advantage is to have one hook length positioned tight behind the lead weight to ensure that bait is presented hard on the seabed. This is the hook most likely to be taken, especially when fishing into deeper water in a tide flow that is strong. A 2-hook 1 up/1 down rig with longer 20-inch hook lengths of 15 to 20lb fluorocarbon is hard to beat. Also, a simple sliding ledger rig can work well for closer range work. The latter needs a longer hook length, around 30-inches, when complete with a dropper hook length of 8in positioned around 24in above the lower hook. This presents two hooks inline spaced apart but again hard on the seabed. This rig will often take two plaice at a time.

It's easy to use too big a hook for plaice. They will gnaw away at a big bait, and they will slowly gulp in size 2/0 hooks. When deliberately targeting them, a size 2 Aberdeen is plenty big enough even for a big plaice. In very settled seas when water movement is minimal and the tide flow slow, a size 4 Aberdeen and smaller baits will be taken more eagerly.

The big question is what about attractor beads; yes or no? If you employ a plain lead that can slowly drift downtide due to tidal pressure on the line, then they are worth a try. If there are light surf tables when fishing the mussel beds and a bait is being lifted and dropped naturally as waves pass overhead, beads can also work. Good combinations are alternate green and black, red and white, red and yellow. Don't use beads that are too big; 5mm are big enough and no more than 6 beads in total. In slightly coloured or deeper water the effectiveness of coloured beads is minimal, if at all, and plain baits perform just as well.

Another form of attractor can work, especially in lower light conditions, and that is a luminous lead weight. Yellow/green ones work well, as will pink or white. Be careful with this as it can have a detrimental effect sometimes too, so is best used in slightly coloured water where the luminous effect works but is subdued a little.

BAITS

It's no coincidence that the plaice arrive by March, just when peeler crab are increasing inside estuaries. This forms their main food supply right through until early October and fattens them up rapidly. If you remove all the shell from a peeler crab about the size of a 50p piece, then halve the body, one half body is ample bait for a size 2 Aberdeen, with a few turns of bait elastic

Lugworm may be the best bait depending on where you are fishing



Peeler crab is hard to beat for plaice



Use mussels too, if you can find them



Two baited plaice rigs ready to catch



A spinning rod and 3500 size reel can be more than adequate

to secure it. It's also worth peeling a couple of crab legs or claws and push these over the hook point to make the bait look that bit more natural, though a squidgy bait oozing juices is the real key.

Plaice are somewhat opportunistic feeders though, and will take blow lug, black lug and ragworm well in some areas. A thin sliver of squid to add movement on the hook point is also worth having in your armoury.

Also underrated is fresh mussel; which is no surprise, especially when fishing near mussel beds but also when estuary fishing over sand.

I also like to make up a few ready-to-go baits as often when one plaice is caught another will follow and feeding periods may be short lived when fishing estuaries.

TECHNIQUE

Targeting the mussel bed plaice, we need to fish an anchored bait using a release wire lead. Let the tide flow drift the bait's scent off downtide and the plaice will follow this up to the source of the smell. If you can't find or hit the patches of sand, don't worry. Fishing a bait on the seed mussel is just as good.

When fishing the deeper scoured-out holes and changes in the main channel direction, you'll do best by employing a plain lead and judging the weight of this to be just light enough to drift downtide due to tidal pressure on the line. The knack then is to cast just uptide where you know the drop-off into the hole begins then let the lead weight roll down the bank and into the hole. This offers perfect natural presentation and if the fish are there, you'll very likely catch them. As

you feel the weight travel down the incline, then comes to a stop, that is the optimum position!

If you're fishing tight into margins covered with weed and stone, use a plain lead to 'feel' out in front of you and try to locate the junction of sand and weed or stone. The plaice tend to hug the edge where ground feature changes. This applies equally to deeper main channels in major estuaries with the bulk of the fish collected close in where the feature change is.

If you're fishing over sand along the edge of a sandy main channel, again, try to find out by trial and error where the uplift of the sand begins and concentrate here. The use of a plain lead and letting it roll round again in the tide can help you do this. Cast out into the tide, let the lead roll round, and when it stops, leave it there!

As for bite detection, when using the one up/one down rig, or a 3-hook flapper as some prefer, then fish with a bow in the line. In deeper water this keeps both baits hard on the seabed and you can watch for the bow in the line tightening or lifting because of a bite. If you fish too tight a line, the top hook will be up in the water column and pretty much achieving nothing. In shallower water drop the angle of your rods to be parallel with the sea and this improves bite detection in calm clear seas.

One thing to emphasise is that to catch estuary plaice you must specifically target them. You can bass fish with peeler crab, hope for a plaice and get the odd one, but that's about it. You must find out exactly where the plaice are, then be single minded in your approach to catch them. It's common to be told, "no plaice here, mate" when they are present in small select areas, but no one is specifically fishing for them. ■

To catch estuary plaice you need to specifically target them



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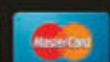
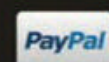
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A SARK SHARK IN THE NIGHT

Chasing a phantom tope
from the shore leads to an
emotional rollercoaster for
Chris Kennedy





If you're ever sitting on the fence, deliberating whether to go fishing, just do it. Every cast puts you a little bit closer to that personal best fish. We're all guilty of procrastinating, and the truth is that a night blanking on the coast is nearly always better than watching mindless television. This is the story of my first proper tope, and the circumstances that led up to it.

A decade or so ago, I was fishing in Hampshire chasing turbot and rays at a place called Paddy's Gap with an old pal, when I happened to reel in a baby tope all of 15 inches long. At the time, it was always good to see a new species but it was certainly nothing to write home about. I have watched on as friends have caught them through the years, often travelling as far as Wales (from Dorset) and as far as Sussex in the opposite direction. It's a species I have certainly wanted to catch but I've never really been motivated to make the journey specifically to target one. Since I moved to the Channel Islands, and after following the adventures of specimen anglers like Nigel Bowditch closely, it has been a species that I've cast baits out for without much luck at all.

HIGHS TURN TO LOWS

In November 2020, weeks after arriving on the island of Sark, I had a run that could only be a tope or a shark of some kind. Sadly for me, the timing could not have been worse, as a giant squid was tangled up in my drop net. As line was peeling off my reel, I desperately tried to free the lure rod and squid. By the time I got to my feet and leant into the Century T1000, the fish had stripped quite a bit of line and it seemed to accelerate when properly realising it was hooked. Within seconds it was gone. I quickly learned the braid had been sliced on some undersea reef and was immediately filled with profound disappointment; I had to fight the instinct to javelin my rod and reel into the sea! I had all kinds of emotions running through me. I just thought, what are the chances? All these casts and my net had to be out of action at the very moment I hooked into a tope. I was haunted by the loss in the days and weeks after. I went back tide after tide, replicating the conditions, baits, rigs, and nothing. The whole period broke me spiritually and mentally. Up and down hills night ►

Huss really are impressive looking creatures, with their striking markings and menacing appearance



after night, carrying tons of kit, hating the world and getting zero rewards. I ended up spending much of the rest of the winter in the pubs, due to weather and just needing to be sociable and find some enjoyment. Fishing does that at times. It chews you up and spits you back out. It doesn't care about feelings, but it gives you the highest highs and the lowest lows.

It was about 4pm when Sea Angler's editor, David Mitchell, called me to ask how I was getting on with articles before the looming print deadline. I'd been busy that morning completing various topical pieces for Sea Angler. As he called I was in the process of packing my 80 litre rucksack for a session down at Maseline Harbour. I was conscious it had been a week since my last bait session and the weather had switched back to south-westerlies. I mentioned I would be off fishing soon, and David asked what I'd be hoping to catch. I explained I'd only had one tope hook-up on the island that wasn't successful but that it was the fish I'd really wanted, as I only knew of one other tope that had been landed on the island by an experienced specimen angler, Rob Yorke. Rob had periodically offered me encouragement about targeting this species, offering helpful hints and tips. I am sure David left the call thinking, 'Chris is a dreamer, going after fish at

such long odds'. My enthusiasm was sky-high, as was my confidence; the greater the task, the more rewarding it feels on completion.

The tagging of tope by marine biologists didn't show tope as passing Sark. I could easily pass off my one run, and Rob's solitary fish from years ago, as very rare occurrences. Still, I also knew the boat skippers catch them between 500 and 800 yards out. My friend Ros popped round at about 5pm to join me on the walk down to the harbour.

We trudged off down the hill, full of optimism. The walk took about 25 minutes and passed in no time at all. I quickly set up my gear and put the first bait out, a beautiful sandeel. I was so disheartened to see the rod tip tapping away, instantly recognisable to any angler as the trademark of the lesser spotted dogfish. Sure enough, on retrieval, it was exactly as I'd guessed; a dog, which managed to graze my hand with the skin on its tail. It never gets old that, does it?

TAP TAP TAP...

For the first few casts it was a repeat of the same. Sandeel and squid were not going to accomplish anything other than attract the dogfish in plague proportions. Fortunately, I had plenty of cuttlefish in my bait bag. Contrary to popular opinion, dogs





the sound of line peeling off the drag. Ros also called out and at the drop of a hat, I snatched the T1000 and waited for another lunge from the fish. It didn't take long, with me rapidly reeling some line, and I was into a solid fish. I gradually worked it from where it was cast, diagonally off the cornered wall and toward the north face where Ros had the landing net ready. Under the bright Led Lenser torchlight, I could see a stout looking huss coming up through the translucent greenish water. It was a huss, as I suspected. The trouble with them as a species is they are artful at spinning off hooks in the last few yards from the net. I was using 6/0 catfish hooks on a 90lb coated wire trace. It all held perfectly as I pulled the huss over the lip of my 5ft floating drop net. By now, after all this fishing with me, Ros is getting very skilled with the net that was probably big enough to fit her in. She instantly pulled the rope up as soon as the fish was over the large opening. I dumped the rod, grabbed the rope, and commenced hauling it up the sheer harbour wall. After five or ten seconds, and some burning palms, the fish was on the deck, safely landed.

When it stopped trying to bite my salopettes and hands, the bull huss was quickly weighed, photographed and slipped back into the water on this truly dark night. The fish had weighed 11lb 8oz on the scales, which had been worth me bothering to get out fishing. I'd instantly forgotten about all the dogs early in the session and that feeling of frustration. Huss really are impressive looking creatures, with their striking markings and menacing appearance. They all have

that angry personality; like they've got out of the wrong side of the bed in the morning. I love them, even if they do feel like sandpaper and destroy your rigs.

I was contented and excited. I returned to my perch and began gazing at the black tide, it mesmerised me. A caliginous sky had developed,

full of moisture. This mist suddenly shrouded the venue; there was an eerie silence, Ros and I not saying a word. A cold shiver ran down my back from the damp air. My mind started willing a better fish to bite, something I assume all anglers do when wanting to succeed. 'Come on, the fish', I shouted, at which point Ros laughed at me.

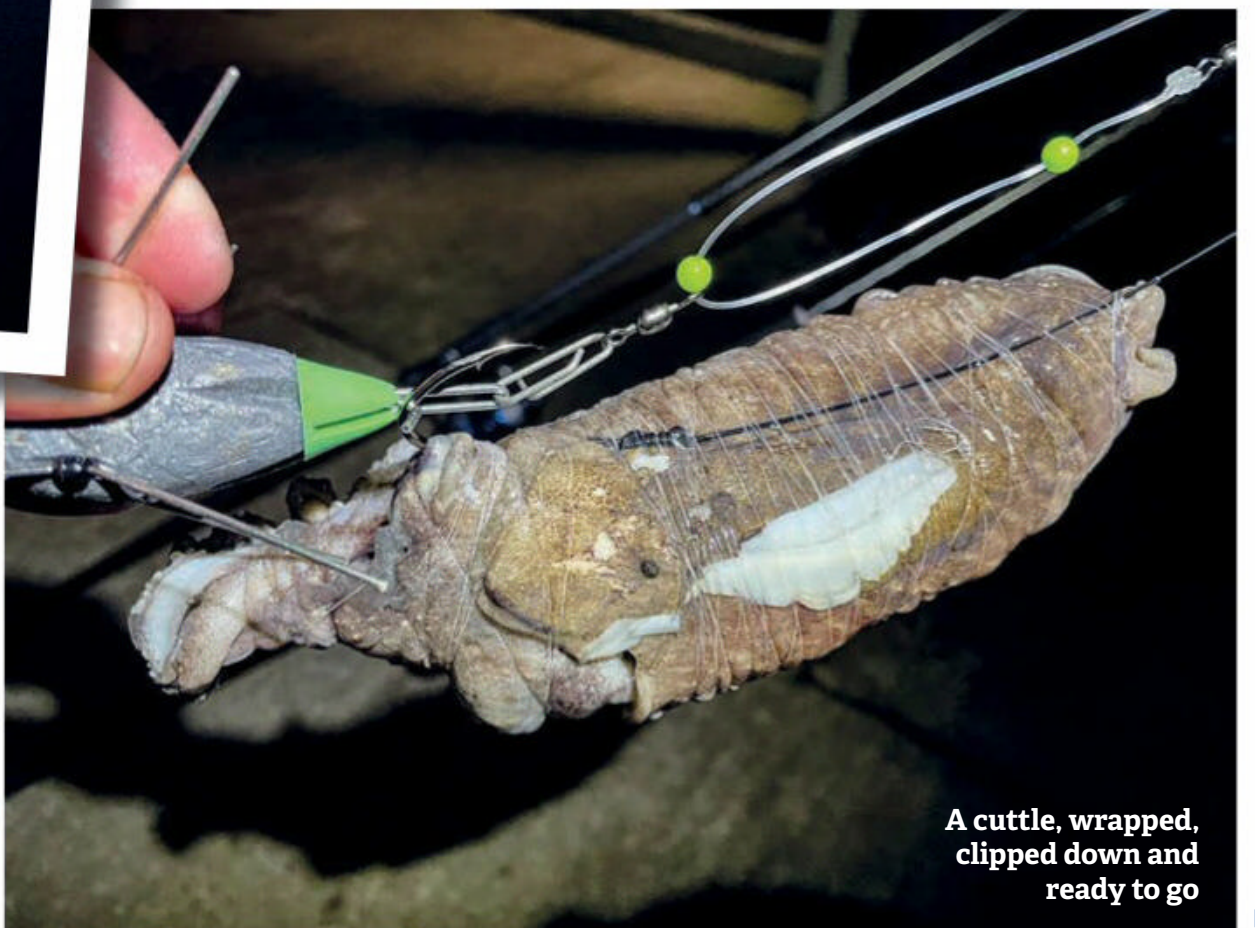
I have no concept of time while fishing, five or six hours can pass in a blink. Moments later, I heard the screaming of the loosely set drag and a rapid movement in my peripheral vision. It was the rod butt of my 14ft 4in T1000. It was off the floor and on a horizontal plane. I was up like a spring salmon to snatch it before the whole tripod, including the second rod, might have hit the breakwater. I quickly did the drag up on the Saltist 6500 fixed spool and lowered the tip, waiting for one good pull, which would be my cue to strike. After four or five seconds, which seemed like an eternity, my back full of tension, I had the lunge I was waiting for, and I connected with what felt like a cracking fish. My heart was racing as the fish thumped powerfully. I felt every sensation through the rod as it darted left, thrashing hard. Ros, without a prompt, had lowered the net into position, ready for whatever was on the end of my line. My adrenaline was going, and it felt fantastic. It had been a while since I hooked something decent, and I was excited to see it surface. Then, to my delight, I saw something fly through the water, gliding with beautiful elegance. It was distinctly light grey, long, and slender. It had to be the tope I'd been after since arriving on the island. Surely? Then something horrific happened; the fish shot straight underneath the waiting net, presenting a massive risk of getting entangled and potentially losing the fish. My heart sank, waiting for it to reappear, hopefully untangled. Luckily for me it did. I'd waited so long for this fish, and it would have been such a cruel twist to see it lost at this final stage. Thankfully, it darted back out, circling a bit more, tiring under the halo of my torchlight.



All the sandeel did was attract the doggies

do eat cuttle; they just fancy it a lot less than mackerel, squid and sandeel. I put out cuttle baits of obscene sizes out on both rods, with my thought process being to make them too difficult for the dogfish to devour. And after a short period, the constant tapping ceased and I felt like I had baits fishing properly again.

The moderate wind off my back had dropped a little, with just the sound of the gentle sea swishing at the harbour structure. I peered off into the distance, in a relaxed trance, dreaming of better times. I was getting cold. I needed to be moving about. After all, it was winter. All of a sudden, I snapped out of my deep thought at



A cuttle, wrapped, clipped down and ready to go

EUPHORIA

I was relieved and very carefully brought it to the lip of the waiting net, using just enough pressure to take it over the edge and into safety. Again, Ros lifted the net with impeccable timing and the fish was secure and, despite its powerful objections, thrashing some 15-20ft below our eyes. I dumped the rod, opening the spool and grabbed the rope to hoist the fish up to the platform we were stood on. As soon as it was safely landed, I screamed 'yes!' and made a few noises that were more akin to someone who had just scored the winning goal in the World Cup. I was elated, punching the air. I am not usually

a tactile person but I hugged Ros, thanking her for her efforts during the landing; it was truly a moment to celebrate. Of all the nights I'd cast baits from Maseline Harbour, desperately wanting a tope after losing an unsighted fish 14 months previously, and it had finally happened for me. All the hours were worth it to capture only the second tope I am aware of from the shore in the island's history. Rob Yorke, a legend of the sport and a very kind guy, who'd caught the first, was one of the first people I messaged with the news. He seemed somewhere near as happy as I was. What a great bloke!

I composed myself and untangled the well-muscled fish from the net, which was no easy task. It was while doing this that something potentially serious almost happened. When the fish came free from the net, I was leant over, and it suddenly sprang up to bite my face. I pulled my head backwards with an instinctive reaction, but I reckon it got to within six inches. I could have easily been the guy without a nose. We both laughed about it, but it shows how careful you have to be. It was hooked perfectly in the corner

of the mouth and the hook was easily removed with some long nose pliers. I made a makeshift sling and weighed the fish. It was roughly what I'd guessed; 28lb 13oz. Ros quickly took four of five pics; the DSLR was already set up from the earlier bull huss capture, which enabled us to get the fish back even quicker. To my joy, the fish swam off into the night as if nothing had happened.

After all this time waiting, it had turned out to be a wonderful experience, something I would argue that only a fisherman can properly understand. Okay, it wasn't my 'Old Man and the Sea' moment, but it was so memorable and rewarding. This is why you should all pick hard targets locally, as nothing has a value that comes easily. Those things we work hard at and that test us are worth their weight in gold.



THE CRASH

I cast back out rapidly, hoping for another run and perhaps a bigger one, or anything else double figure. I've caught 400lb plus sharks from the shore abroad, and to be honest, the rod and reel combination made very short work of this tope, but I was just pleased to get one. While mulling over the fantastic night I was having, I began wishing for another double-figure fish to cap off the night, either a great ray or a decent conger eel. As we approached high tide, I had a bite developing on another huge cuttlefish bait. Could this be the fish that would make the session a double red-letter day? I saw the rod steady leaning over, which can easily be confused with heavy weed on the line. Still, there was undoubtedly a periodic fish-like movement. I waited; some line peeled off as if a ray was gliding off gracefully. I picked up the rod, not realising how close the line was to the wall. When I leant into it, applying pressure, the line ever so briefly

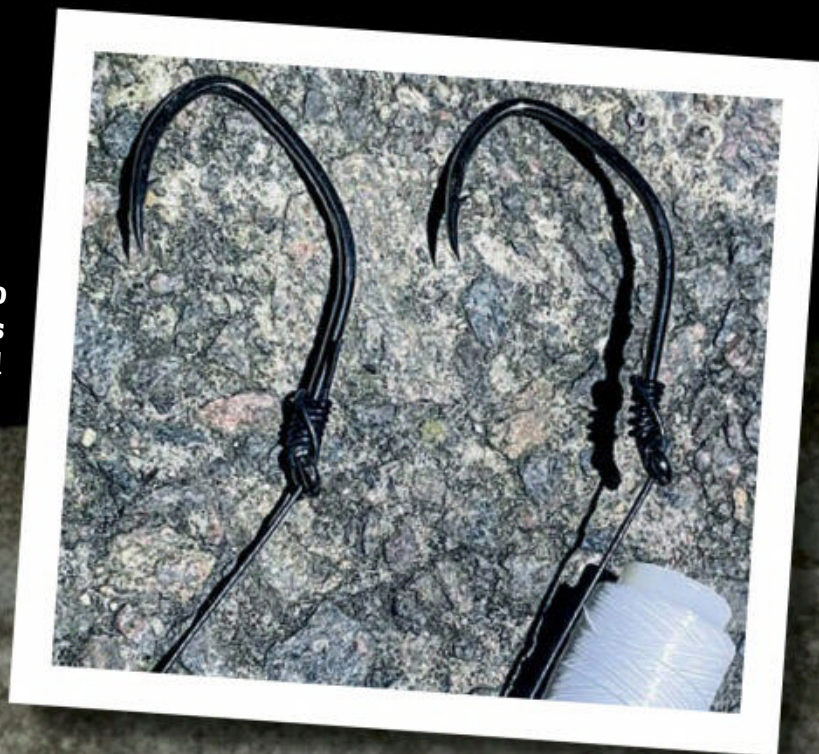
touched the high wall on the opposite side, and the fish was gone. Silence ...

My mood instantly changed from jubilation to being very self-critical. I knew the human error involved and punished myself for it. That was it. I was more or less out of bait. It was around midnight, and I was mourning the fish that got away, partly because I'd have possibly crowned the session with something different but also because I'd now left a fish swimming around with the length of line. Sure, the hooks would corrode and probably work themselves out but it was just a silly mistake on my part, and it soured the whole evening. I barely spoke a word walking up the hill, haunted by a lost fish. It illustrates how bittersweet the

fishing experience can be; it toys with our emotions.

As I sit here with cuttle ink blackened hands, fingernails like a car mechanic, sharing my meandering mixed experience from Maseline Harbour, my message to all of you who are reading is simple; dust the rods off, get out, and chase the fish of your dreams. There are few things better in life than this magical thing that we do. PB fish and potential records are out there waiting for you. Your story is largely unwritten. It's up to you to make it remarkable. ■

RIGHT: 6/0 catfish hooks and 90lb coated wire trace



My adrenaline was going and it felt fantastic. It had been a while since I hooked something decent, and I was excited to see it surface

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Words
JAMES T MADSEN
Pictures
DAMON VALENTINE

WHERE TO FISH

BRANSCOMBE BEACH

This east Devon venue is the perfect place to target some spring place over the coming weeks

Branscombe is a lovely little village which sits between Beer and Salcombe Regis in east Devon. You will have to negotiate some very narrow country lanes in order to gain access to the beach at Branscombe, but once there you'll find a good size pay and display car park. This is a shingle beach which goes off onto sand. However, there is some heavy ground on each side of the main beach when looking out from the car park. This mixture of underwater terrain gives you loads of options with regards to fishing and different species of fish to target. As a rule of thumb, the seabed is relatively clean when fishing up to the end of the first set of small huts on the right-hand side of the beach, and up to the end of the larger beach huts on the left-hand side.

SPECIES

The cleaner ground in these areas are favoured by the anglers who want to target plaice in daylight hours and rays during the night. The rough ground on the periphery of the beach is made up of rock and kelp and there is a good range of different species which can be caught in these areas. Branscombe is well known for chucking up some decent bull huss in the rougher areas of the beach, along with conger eels, bass and some good size Ballan wrasse.



Surveying the water at Branscombe



In the spring when the water is clear I'd most definitely recommend targeting plaice over the cleaner areas of the beach in daylight hours. You could also see an early run of smoothhounds in the spring, along with some large female small eyed ray in the hours of darkness. Keep your eyes out for the thick lipped mullet which often start to make an appearance in late spring/ early summer. It's also worth getting your lure rods out when we're nearing the end of spring and having a go targeting bass and Ballan wrasse.

After any spell of unsettled weather you will find the sea around Branscombe will go very dirty and this is the time when you would be best targeting the bull huss and congers. There is also a good chance of a big bass in stormy weather. As we reach mid-summer the fishing can be rather slow. During the warmer months of the year, when the weather is more settled, I'd recommend getting out your lighter beach casting set-ups out and having a go targeting mackerel, garfish and mullet. ►

Branscombe is located between Beer and Salcombe Regis





Another Branscombe spring plaice

Fishing in autumn at Branscombe is a personal favourite of mine and can often produce the best of the fishing. September and October can literally produce all the fish species Branscombe has to offer. It really can be incredible action at times. The winter months are generally unsettled with poor water clarity; nevertheless, there will be plenty of fish to keep you occupied, especially dogfish and pouting, along with the chance of a few larger predators.

BAIT & TACTICS

Depending on the sea condition, clarity of the water, and time of year, Branscombe holds a good many possibilities for many different sea angling disciplines, from lure fishing to a more conventional beach casting approach and even some lighter float fishing. If you want to target plaice, ragworm is often the most favoured bait. I like to use multiple hook rigs when targeting flatfish and attractor beads when targeting plaice. Don't worry too much about casting distances. If you can cast a long way that will



Try daylight hours during settled weather

give you more options, but plaice can be caught at all casting distances on this beach. Sandeel and squid baits seem to be a favourite when targeting the rays. Peeler crab and mackerel, particularly fresh mackerel, can also work very well. It may be worth noting, you will mostly catch small eyed and thornback rays from this beach by using bigger hooks with larger baits. It could also be worth considering a multitude hook rig when targeting rays, especially when there are lots of dogfish in this area of the coast.

You will want a very different approach when fishing over the heavier ground here. When fishing on the rough I'd definitely consider using a rotten bottom, or weak link to your lead, to cut down on tackle losses, along with heavier mainlines and single hook rigs. I've also had some success using circle hooks when fishing over the rougher ground. It's often

actually your hooks which get caught and circle hooks can also help to prevent heavy tackle losses. Your other option is selecting hooks which you can bend out, with the aid of heavier mainlines of course. A mixture of different fish baits can work well over the rough ground. Mackerel, squid, peeler crab, bluey and snake launce will catch the bull huss and conger eels. King ragworm can also be an excellent bait for catching huss and will also catch bass and the Ballan wrasse. In the warmer, more settled, months of the year you should try scaling down your fishing gear. Try using small hooks, lighter mainlines and snoods with the addition of some pop-up floats. Small slivers of fish baits, fished on a light setup with pop-ups can produce mackerel, garfish, scad, mullet and gurnards in the summer months. ■

Branscombe beach is shingle leading to sand



NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Leave M5 at junction 28 and then pick up the A373 heading towards Honiton. Join the A375 when you reach Honiton and turn left onto Seaton Road when you reach Putts Corner. Follow the signposts to Branscombe.



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SOUTH-EAST CORNWALL

From Whitsand Bay to St Austell, Mike Millman charts a course to marks which consistently produce species for every shore angler

The rock shelf giving way to deep water



This stretch of the coastline is long and varied and features rugged stretches, headlands, storm beaches, coves and estuaries that cut deep inland.

SPECIES

Bass can be caught throughout the range of marks from Whitsand Bay to St Austell. Rays can be caught in the sandy bays while wrasse and congers are always present in the rocky deep-water marks strewn between the coves and bays. Estuary marks produce flounder, school bass and grey mullet in the summer and autumn.

WHITSAND BAY

Tregantle Beach three miles in length and a good bass venue is bordered by the Grotto Rock spit stretching beyond the third breaker. The best time and tide for bass is a late autumn evening with a big tide on a flood or as dawn breaks. The occasional small-eyed ray can also be expected during the night hours, particularly at Downderry Beach, which is hard up to Seaton Cove. Here a channel brings bass in as the tide makes.

LANSALLOS

Lansallos is on the edge of Lanivet Bay is a rugged stretch of coast below the cliff. Park near the church and go west across the long field to pick up a track that runs to the cliff edge and down to the waterline. It is wrasse-rich territory and it is not that difficult to catch

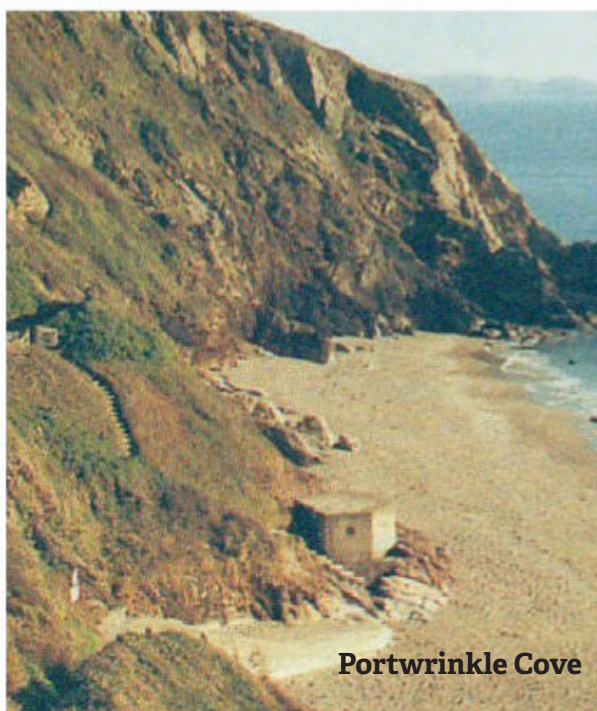




a five pounder. After dark big conger will be roaming for prey and drift-lined prawn is great in the autumn for bass. The biggest tides tend to give the better opportunity as the water will be covering the gullies and chasms reached by a moderate cast. Always make sure that retreat back up the cliff is available when high water invades the base rocks.

FOWEY

The Fowey is a fine place for a fishing holiday and the harbour attracts dozens of species fished for from accessible walls, rocks and sandy beaches. The ground running in on the Polruan side is popular for sliding float and bottom fishing in the deep water. Peeler and soft crabs are no longer as numerous as once they were but an hour of dedicated 'picking' will produce enough for a good session. The Fowey area is noted for its bass and live prawn offered on float tackle is effective. Prawns can be caught quite easily by pushing a long-handled net through the shallows close to the rocks in the weedy areas. Mullet are common and can be seen nosing around close to the shore or feeding on an unwanted sandwich tossed away by a visitor. Evening sport with very light float gear baited with bread paste, mackerel flake or ragworm can be great fun, but large harbour mullet are crafty creatures and must be enticed with a good level of ground baiting.



Portwrinkle Cove

PONT CREEK

On the East side of the river is the quiet wooded and picturesque Pont Creek. School bass and flounders are found here and take ragworm or crab on bottom gear. Pont is reached by a narrow path running down through the woods from above Bodinnick. There is a small 'ferry' that plies a lively trade across the narrow stretch of deep water and so deep is it, ocean going freighters pass through the neck to moor at the china clay loading jetties. This is conger country and once the ferry has stopped, the slipway is an ideal casting point and fish as big as 50lb have been caught. Upstream of the jetties flounders and plaice are the main quarry. This area of river is best reached from Golant where there is good parking. Fishing is not available from the jetties and only the river beach can be used to reach a sandbar area where I once lost a flounder in full view the line twisted around a fond of weed until it broke. It was so big one guy was halfway to stripping off to swim for it when it broke free!

MEVAGISSEY & CHAPEL POINT

This famous fishing village and harbour has a substantial outer breakwater that produces sizeable conger, bass during the summer/autumn and cod and whiting in the winter. A mile or so further west is Chapel Point stretching out a considerable distance from Portmellon, which has a reputation for big ballans; I know of one angler who had the good fortune to catch two in the 7lb class in the same session. Bottom fishing with crab is the way to go at this mark which features gullies on both sides of the spit and off the actual Point itself. Bass are also caught, usually at first and last light. The beaches of Carlyon Bay have a heavy surf during a Southerly blow – taken advantage of by large bass.

BAIT

Live prawns are deadly for bass and can be collected locally. Peeler crab is the number one local bait and can be purchased or collected locally. Worm baits will work for bass and flounders in the estuaries and large fish baits such as mackerel or pout will sort out the congers from the deep-water rock marks. ■

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Whitsand Bay is located on the western side of the River Tamar and Plymouth and can be accessed from the city by one of the ferries, or from the north by exiting the A38 at Trerulefoot and heading south on the A347. The area is covered by Ordnance Survey sheet 200 150.000.



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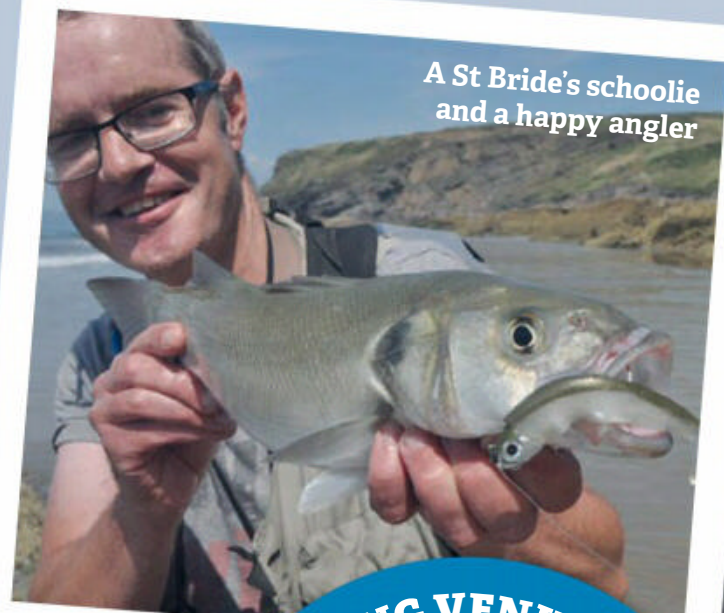
ST BRIDES BAY

With your lure tackle sorted why not head west to the stunning Pembrokeshire coast, classic Welsh bass fishing country!

Situated in the extreme south-west corner of Wales; indeed, just about as far south and west as you can get in the Principality, St Brides Bay offers exciting angling possibilities for the shore angler. The lure fishing from the rocks is excellent, and that is what we are going to focus on in this article. Those amongst you who are keen to explore wild, remote and unspoiled areas of the coastline, while travelling light with just a rod and box of lures, in areas where on most days it is extremely unlikely you'll encounter another angler, will certainly not be disappointed!

The rugged stretch of coastline between the village of Marloes, near Skomer Island at the southern end of the bay, and the famous surf beach at Newgale in the north, is located within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and can be accessed on foot from the Welsh

Coastal Path. The local roads which twist and turn their way through the rolling Welsh countryside are mostly narrow single-track lanes and safe vehicle parking is limited to places at various locations adjacent to the coastal path. It is advisable, and certainly advantageous, to study a map of the area before your first visit, and, of course, to choose your parking place with care ensuring you do not block gateways, private drives or, in any way, impede the passage of larger vehicles using these narrow lanes. The best times to visit, and the best time to fish for that matter, are usually early in the morning and late in the evening. Finding a suitable parking spot after mid-morning on a summer's day will not be easy!



A St Bride's schoolie and a happy angler



SPECIES

This is bass country, and local anglers looking specifically to catch bass over the productive inter-tidal rough ground often aim to arrive around high tide. Such is the extent of the tidal range here in South Wales, that as the waterline gradually recedes you gain access to an ever-increasing expanse of open ground from which to fish. As you work your way along the coast you'll come across numerous small sandy beaches and intimate coves that are revealed by the falling tide. It is certainly worth stopping for a cast or two at these. Elsewhere you will find a profusion of rocky reefs most of which are shrouded in a thick blanket of rubbery kelp. Other inter-tidal reefs feature deep rock pools and gullies which are absolutely perfect ground for the foraging bass you are hoping to catch on your lures! Pollack, wrasse, mackerel and occasional small coalfish are also caught, especially when fishing around high water.

TACTICS

Soft plastics such as an OSP DoLive Stick are perfect. Not only are these proven fish catchers but they can be rigged to fish weedless, which clearly is a huge advantage when you consider the nature of the ground over which you will be fishing. Of course, the ever-popular Black Minnow is another excellent choice of lure. Hard plastic lures, too, are very effective at times,



especially shallow divers, stick baits and walk-the-dog type lures. Metal lures can be effective when fishing deeper water, again, around high water, as these can be cast a long way.

The coastline here is open and exposed, where often you'll encounter a rolling swell pushing in over the rocks; rocks that are dangerously slippery due to a slick coating of fine green weed. You'll need chest waders fitted with good quality wading boots, or, better still, a neoprene wet suit which provides excellent protection from the rocks, and will keep you warm as you traverse the coastline. Clearly most of this area of the

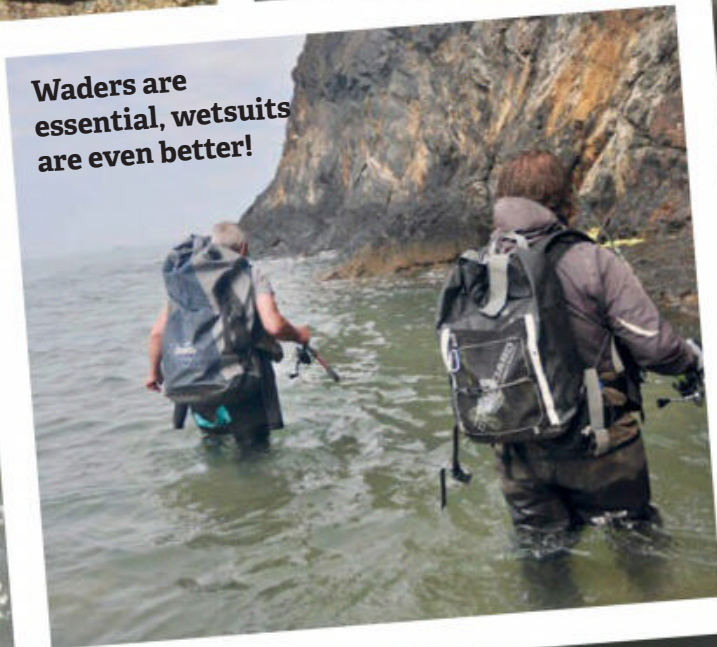
Pembrokeshire coast is not suitable for elderly, junior or less able anglers, but there are plenty of excellent marks that do provide more suitable access close by. Ask for the location of these at local tackle shops, details below.

The most productive time for lure fishing is from late spring, through the summer months and well into the autumn. Throughout this period the fishing is good, often excellent, but the very best time, especially for bigger bass, is invariably late summer and autumn. I love fishing here at the end of September and throughout October. ■



Weedless soft plastics are very effective

Waders are essential, wetsuits are even better!



NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Leave the M4 westbound towards Carmarthen on the A48. Then head towards Haverfordwest on the A40. From there you can choose which part of the expanse of St Bride's Bay to fish.



TACKLE & BAIT

Anglers Corner, based in nearby in Milford Haven, is the closest tackle shop. Open seven days a week, Sunday being a half-day. Anyone looking for tackle or bait, or the latest advice and news on the Pembrokeshire sea angling scene, would be well advised to either call or pop in for a chat. The shop stocks an excellent selection of lures, including all of the favourite models in colours used by local anglers. Tel: 01646 698899.



FIVE BAR GATE AND THE SLABS

A year-round Lancashire venue that produces a variety of fish for all angling abilities and is a stone's throw from Blackpool – what's not to like!

This venue lies at the northern end of Cleveleys promenade on the Fylde coast between Fleetwood and Blackpool. It consists of a flat beach, sandy for the most part but with pebbles at the high-water mark and concrete slabs forming part of the sea defences from just past the gate up to Rossall school.

The tide goes out for about a quarter of a mile on the big tides and the beach is interspaced with a couple of gullies. The venue gets its name from the gate at the end of the road.

SPECIES

Late autumn and winter sees whiting, codling, dabs, rockling and the odd bass, dogfish and flounder. Spring sees plaice, flounder, dogfish, bass, and smoothhounds moving in, as well as thornback ray. Summer sees the smoothhound, rays and bass become more established. These



Smoothhounds will soon be a target species

are joined by sole and the odd tub gurnard, tope pups and silver eels. Early autumn sees a slow decline of the summer fish and the first showing of codling and whiting, plus a lot of dogfish and the possibility of a huss or strap conger.

Each year there are smoothhound over 10lb and thornbacks getting towards double figures. Some good bass are taken at this time of year too.

TACTICS

The venue can be fished at all stages of the tide but generally, fish two and a half hours up to high tide and a couple of hours back.

If fishing over low water, fish two hours down to low and back up for the same. This depends when you can cross the gullies to access the banks on the other side. Great care should be taken at low water as these gullies fill quick and the unwary can get cut off. Extra care must be taken if fishing at night. Care should also be taken if fishing the slabs on a big tide and an onshore wind as the swell will run up these.

It can fish equally good high or low water but for smoothhounds, rays and cod low water has the edge. Night tides can produce better than daylight tides. This venue is suitable for





A decent huss



Fishing with Blackpool Tower in the distance

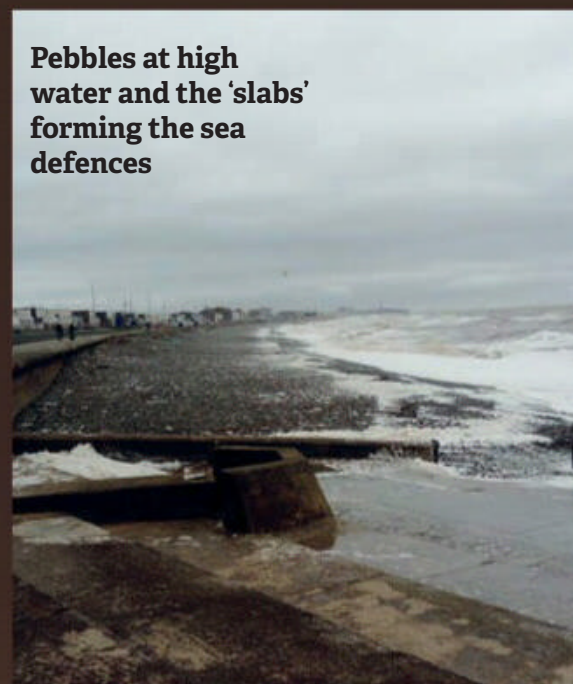


anglers of all abilities as long casts are not always needed. It is more important to get your bait into a gully. The beach is mostly snag free but some of the gullies are stony and there are patches of rough ground beyond the low water mark, so some tackle losses may occur.

TACKLE

Standard beach casting tackle and continental type rods are fine. A heavier beach rod may be needed in rough conditions, or if a lot of weed is about. A larger capacity reel is useful at low water fishing the flood as you can back up with the tide.

12lb to 15lb line and a shockleader is fine for most situations. Hook sizes vary from size 4 for flatties up to 4/0 for cod and large bass; 2/0 and 3/0 are more appropriate for smoothhounds and thornbacks



Pebbles at high water and the 'slabs' forming the sea defences



Spring sees the first early bass here too

BAIT

Baits depend on the species. Lug and rag will catch most species and a big black lug worm is the top bait for cod which can be pumped at low water while you are fishing. Crab is the supreme bait for smoothhound, bass and flounders. Worm and squid wraps, or mackerel and squid, works well for the rays. Whiting will take most baits tipped with fish (mackerel, Bluey or sandeel). ■

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Drive north along the promenade at Cleveleys until the road ends. There is plenty of free parking here and the beach is in front of you. Parking is allowed until 10pm.



TACKLE & BAIT

The nearest shops are:

- Hookers Baits, 35a Beach Road, Cleveleys, FY5 1EG. Te: 01253 860505
- Bispham Angling, 7 Red Bank Road, FY2 9HN. Tel: 01253 358194





TRUNCH LANE

Famous for its smoothhound fishing, there is so much more at Chapel St Leonards

Trunch Lane, situated at Chapel St Leonards near the holiday resort of Skegness on the Lincolnshire coast, offers easy access to some excellent fishing for most of the year. It is a well-known spot for smoothhounds and every year several over 20lb are caught.

A bonus with Trunch Lane is that there is plenty of parking and you simply walk the short distance from the car park to the beach. Another advantage is there is a good fishing tackle shop on site called Big Catch Tackle, which also stocks live and frozen baits.

SEASONAL SPECIES

Besides the summer smoothhounds, Trunch Lane is superb in autumn and winter for whiting fishing. Many of the matches fished here in the colder months require more than 30 fish to get in the frame. There are also dabs, thornback rays, dogfish, bass and the occasional cod, although the latter seem to be very scarce along the Lincolnshire coast.

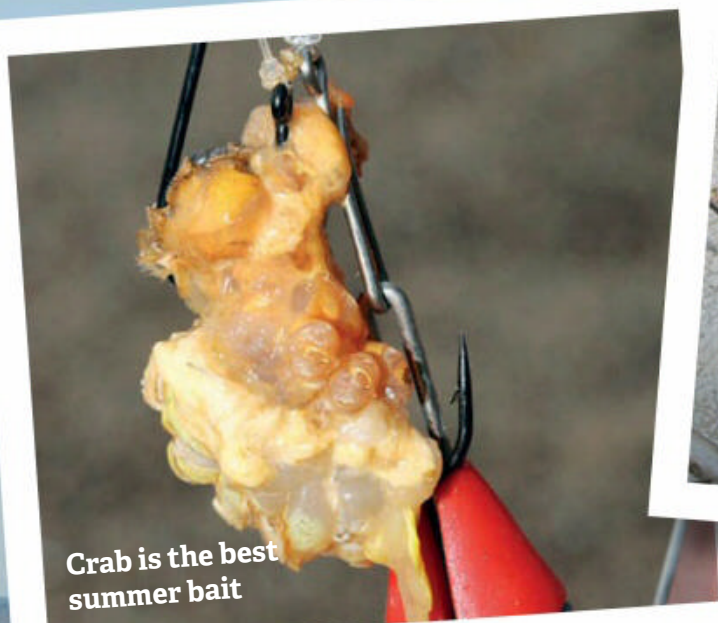
Easy access from the car park to the beach



Try a clipped down up-and-over rig



Crab is the best summer bait





Trunch Lane is noted for summer hounds



Autumn and winter sees great whiting fishing

TACTICS

This is a clean, sandy, beach with a few holes and sandbanks. You can fish at most stages of the tide, but its height will determine how much weight you need; I find five ounces is sufficient.

When seeking whiting, use three-hook rigs, such as a clipped-down version with either three hook snoods above the lead weight or two up and one down. Fluorocarbon is good for hooklengths, varying from 15lb to 24lb depending on what may be in front of you. Make each hook snood between 12 and 18 inches long. Hooks should be either size 1 or 2.

In the autumn and winter, bonus fish appear too. In recent years, thornback rays have shown up and king rag has been a very good bait for these, but mostly it is black lug, while many of the locals favour wrap baits. If you are going for the dabs, a worm with a bit of smell can bring very good results. Tipping your bait with fish or squid can pay benefits.

Summer here is noted for the smoothhounds. Some days you will not be able to leave your rod, while on others you won't get a bite. Hounds will strip line off your reel so make sure that that your drag set to allow line to come off when the hound makes its run. Every year there is an occasional tope caught too. It is not unusual to find something has bitten through your trace.

Best bait in the summer is a crab, although squid will bring results. A clipped-down up and over rig, featuring an upside down Gemini rig clip, creates a very long hook trace, and is ideal for the bigger fish.

You can get away with most rod and reel options. Most of the top anglers stick to a multiplier reel and a 13ft or 14ft rod, but the longer continental poles have become very popular when teamed with a fixed-spool reel and loaded with 12-15lb line. Make sure you have got a decent leader because sometimes the fish rub against the line. ■

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Chapel St Leonards is north of Skegness and Ingoldmells. Access is from the A1028 or A158. The postcode is PE24 5TU. After you see a sign for Big Catch tackle, head into the car park. There is also a cafe next door.



TACKLE SHOPS

■ Big Catch Tackle, Trunch Lane, Chapel St Leonards, PE24 5TU, tel: 01754 872631.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Catch a specimen fish to stand a chance of winning some great new prizes on offer

FANCY WINNING A NEW ROD AND REEL COMBO from Okuma by catching a great fish? In our catch competition, your target is to catch one over the weight given on our nominated species list. If you do, enter our contest and you automatically stand a chance of winning either our shore or boat prize.

Each issue we award a superb Okuma package to the captor of the best shore fish and best boat-caught fish, both chosen on merit.

Prizes are awarded at our discretion and Okuma reserves the right to send alternative prizes.



Josh Harrop, Bristol

FISH: 15lb 4oz blonde ray **BAIT:** squid and sand eel wrap **VENUE:** South Wales **DATE:** April 3rd



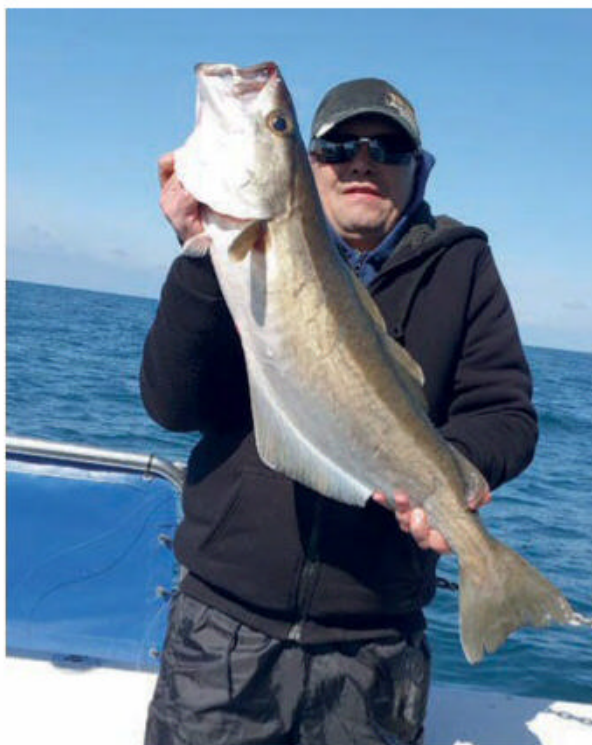
Jay Pickup, Merseyside

FISH: 11lb 9oz bull huss **BAIT:** Squid and mackerel **VENUE:** Cable Bay **DATE:** March 19th



Leo Connolly, Somerset

FISH: 5lb 3oz spotted ray **BAIT:** Sandeel **VENUE:** Seatown **DATE:** April 7th



Kevin Marples

FISH: 15lb pollack **BAIT:** blue sidewinder **VENUE:** Weymouth on Al's Spirit skippered by Adrian Brown **DATE:** April 3rd



Kevin Williams, Anglesey

FISH: 9lb 12oz bull huss **BAIT:** Mackerel/ Bluey cocktail **VENUE:** Anglesey **DATE:** 22nd March



Phil Cocker

VENUE: Beer **FISH:** 7lb 11oz brill **BAIT:** ragworm **DATE:** April 3rd



Will Roberts, Flintshire
FISH: 2lb 8oz plaice **BAIT:** black lug tipped with fresh crab **VENUE:** Mostyn on the River Dee
DATE: March 26th



Alan Quick, Plymouth
FISH: 3lb 7oz flounder **BAIT:** ragworm
VENUE: St. John's Lake, Cornwall
DATE: February 8th



Phil Ingleson
FISH: 200lb skate **VENUE:** West of Scotland with Kevin Mckie on Size Matters



Chris Prouse, Wellington, Somerset
FISH: 17lb 3oz thornback ray
BAIT: sardine **VENUE:** Osprey out of Minehead skippered by Steve Webber **DATE:** March 30th



John Owan, Liverpool
FISH: 199lb common skate
BAIT: Mackerel, octopus and squid cocktails
VENUE: West coast of Scotland onboard Size Matters
DATE: March 26th



Damian White
FISH: 8lb 10z Bass **BAIT:** sandeel and squid
VENUE: South Wales **DATE:** March 24th



Ian Royce, Peterborough
FISH: 20lb spurdog **BAIT:** squid
VENUE: Felixstowe **DATE:** 24th march



Ellie Lindop, Craobh Haven
FISH: Common Skate of 196lb
BAIT: Mackerel, octopus and squid cocktails
VENUE: West coast of Scotland onboard Size Matters **DATE:** March 27th



Harry Weeks
FISH: common skate **BAIT:** Whole mackerel
VENUE: Seadog charters from Ardfarn Marina
DATE: March 19th



Dave Brown, Crawley
FISH: 11lb 5oz undulate ray **BAIT:** squid
VENUE: Chesil beach **DATE:** March 19th

MONTHLY WINNERS:
SHORE: Josh Harrop, Bristol
BOAT: Chris Prouse, Somerset

MISSION RECORD HOLDERS

BASS

■ **Shore:** 19lb 13oz 8dr
John Locker
■ **Boat:** 19lb 4oz
Wayne Milton

BLACK BREAM

■ **Shore:** 5lb 5oz 1dr
C Le Monnier
■ **Boat:** 6lb 6oz
Tony Heart

COUCH'S BREAM

■ **Shore:** 2lb 15oz 1dr
Lynton Carre
■ **Boat:** 7lb Becky
Lee Hodges

GILTHEAD BREAM

■ **Shore:** 9lb 8oz
Scott Smy
■ **Boat:** 10lb 2oz
Roger Simcox

PANDORA'S BREAM

■ **Shore:** 1lb 2oz
Baz Wheeler
■ **Boat:** 6lb 10z
Jordan Colwell

RAY'S BREAM

■ **Shore:** 6lb 4oz
Patrick Meegan
■ **Boat:** 6lb 4oz
Patrick Meegan

BRILL

■ **Shore:** 6lb 12oz
Mark Griggs
■ **Boat:** 13lb 10oz
Tony Hayward

BULL HUSS

■ **Shore:** 21lb 9oz
M Urquhart
■ **Boat:** 23lb
D Nicholson

BALLAN WRASSE

■ **Shore:** 9lb 4oz
Darren Swift
■ **Boat:** 9lb
Glen Carter

CUCKOO WRASSE

■ **Shore:** 1lb 13oz
Joe Edward
■ **Boat:** 2lb 4oz
D Glendenning

COALFISH

■ **Boat:** 34lb
Peter Sillito
■ **Shore:** 32lb
Adrian Lloyd

COD

■ **Boat:** 49lb
Tony Urwin
■ **Shore:** 66lb 8oz
Andy Eke

CONGER EEL

■ **Boat:** 109lb 8oz
Roger Beer
■ **Shore:** 2lb 4oz 12dr
Jason Tucker

DAB

■ **Boat:** 11b 15oz
Sean McCaffrey
■ **Shore:** 5lb 5oz
Phil Troke

DOVER SOLE

■ **Boat:** 4lb 6oz
M Le-Moignan
■ **Shore:** 4lb 14oz 8dr
Paul Blehs

FLOUNDER

■ **Boat:** 5lb 3oz 14dr
Philip Dawson
■ **Shore:** 76lb
Peter Sillito

HALIBUT

■ **Boat:** 3lb 3oz
G Newcombe
■ **Shore:** 2lb 14oz
Philip Lewis

MEGRIM

■ **Shore:** 6lb 11oz
Martin Coates
■ **Boat:** 8lb 0oz 8dr
M Mowbray

PLAICE

■ **Shore:** 18lb 11oz
Ross McKay
■ **Boat:** 88lb 6oz 8dr
Gareth Laurenson

GOLDEN GREY MULLET

■ **Shore:** 3lb 8oz 8dr
D Woolcombe
■ **Boat:** 4lb 11oz
Stephan Martini

TRIGGER FISH

■ **Boat:** 5lb
Gordon Baines
■ **Shore:** 3lb 7oz
Mark Cundick

MULLET

■ **Shore:** 11lb 8oz
Glenn Lane
■ **Boat:** 11lb
Chris Harris

POLLACK

■ **Shore:** 18lb 4oz
Chris Griffin
■ **Boat:** 27lb 10z
Barry James

BLONDE RAY

■ **Shore:** 31lb
Gary Tucker
■ **Boat:** 39lb 10oz
S Underwood

COMMON SKATE

■ **Shore:** 232lb
Lew Marsden
■ **Boat:** 249lb
Hans Dykman

CUCKOO RAY

■ **Shore:** 4lb 11oz
Kevin Hughes
■ **Boat:** 5lb 8oz
L Longmore

EAGLE RAY

■ **Shore:** 102lb
Ray Lewis
■ **Boat:** 52lb
Chris Wood

MARBLED RAY

■ **Shore:** 11lb 10z 5dr
Pierre Garrick
■ **Boat:** 21lb 7oz 12dr
David Bree

SMALL-EYED RAY

■ **Shore:** 17lb 8oz
M Robertson
■ **Boat:** 21lb
Dave Lynes

SPOTTED RAY

■ **Shore:** 7lb 14oz
Liam Warder
■ **Boat:** 8lb 4oz
Neil Buckett

STINGRAY

■ **Shore:** 75lb 4oz
Ed Spring
■ **Boat:** 69lb 8oz
John Styles

THORNBACK RAY

■ **Shore:** 22lb 11oz 10dr
Mike Johnson
■ **Boat:** 24lb 11oz
Gary Mewdell

UNDULATE RAY

■ **Shore:** 20lb 10z
Steve Harder
■ **Boat:** 25lb 2oz
Scott Russell

ANGEL SHARK

■ **Boat:** 54lb
John Johnson
■ **Shore:** 253lb
James Fellows

MAKO SHARK

■ **Shore:** 194lb 4oz
Andrew Griffith
■ **Boat:** 550lb,
Simon Davidson

PORBEAGLE SHARK

■ **Boat:** 350lb
Bob Smith
■ **Shore:** 28lb 10oz
Steve Cullen

THRESHER SHARK

■ **Boat:** 30lb
Trevor Knight
■ **Shore:** 18lb 14oz
William Roche

SMOOTHOUND

■ **Boat:** 27lb 3oz
Paul Westaway
■ **Shore:** 66lb 10oz
Michael Bell

TOPE

■ **Boat:** 86lb
David Cook
■ **Shore:** 9lb 5oz
Tommy Fraser

TORSK

■ **Shore:** 20lb 2oz
Eddy Barham
■ **Boat:** 32lb 10z
Steve Scally

TURBOT

■ **Shore:** 160lb
Pete Hammersley
■ **Boat:** 160lb
Pete Hammersley

WHITE SKATE

■ **Shore:** 160lb
Pete Hammersley
■ **Boat:** 160lb
Pete Hammersley

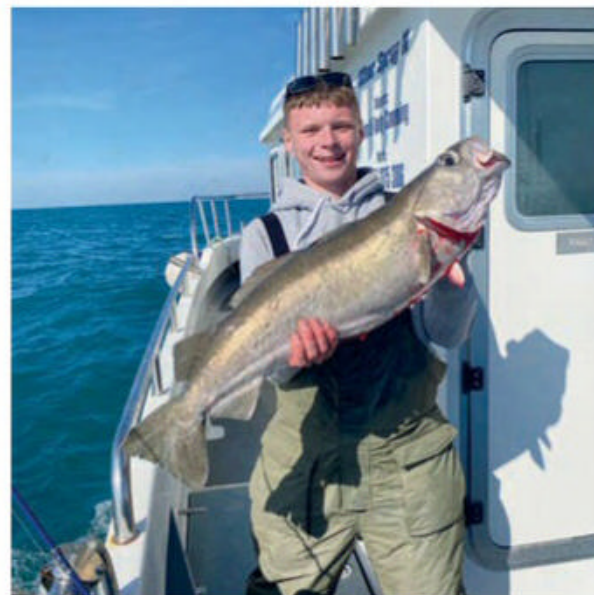


Aaron Colhoun

FISH: 14lb 9oz pollock **BAIT:** Sidewinder skerries

VENUE: English Channel

DATE: April 6th



Oli Hayes, Winchester

FISH: 14lb 7oz pollack **BAIT:** unknown

VENUE: English Channel **DATE:** April 4th

HOW TO ENTER

Entry by email only to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Please supply these details: angler's name, age, address, telephone number, email, type of fish, weight of fish, where caught, date caught, bait/rig, whether caught from shore or boat, if from charter boat, give name of boat, port and skipper. Please state if the fish was retained or returned.

YOUR MISSION TARGETS...

Catch a fish on this list at the weight or above in your region to qualify for the chance to win prizes in our Mission catch competition.

To enter, send us the details requested on the entry form (left) and email that information and your picture to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk

	SHORE	BOAT
Bass	7lb	9lb
Black bream	2lb	3lb
Red bream	2lb	3lb
Couch's &		
Pandora's bream	1lb 8oz	1lb 8oz
Gilthead bream	4lb	4lb
Ray's bream	3lb	3lb
Brill	3lb	5lb
Bull huss	8lb	12lb
Cod	7lb	10lb
Conger	20lb	40lb
Dab & megrim	1lb	1lb
Dover/lemon sole	2lb	2lb
Flounder	2lb	2lb
Halibut	20lb	20lb
Ling	5lb	19lb
Mullet	4lb	5lb
Golden grey mullet	2lb	2lb
Plaice	2lb	4lb
Pollack/coalfish	6lb	12lb
Common skate	60lb	100lb
Blonde ray	12lb	17lb
Thornback ray	9lb	14lb
Small-eyed/undulate	7lb	11lb
Ray (other)	3lb	5lb
Sting/eagle ray	20lb	25lb
Smoothhound	10lb	14lb
Spurdog	7lb	11lb
Tope	27lb	35lb
Trigger fish	2lb	3lb
Turbot	10lb	13lb
Wrasse (ballan)	4lb	4lb
Wrasse (other)	1lb	1lb
Blue shark	-	60lb
Porbeagle/thresher	-	100lb

Send us your entries and win some great prizes

■ **SHORE: LURE OPTION:**
Solaris 4000 or 5000 reel
RRP: £60
Epixor 15-50g rod
RRP: £80



■ **SHORE: BAIT OPTION**
DSA reel
RRP: £60
Wave Power surf rod

■ **BOAT**
Classic CLX
RRP: £60
Cortez Boat Rod
RRP: £90



THE RULES...

■ Only fish caught since April 2022 are eligible.

■ We must see a picture of the fish.

■ We may refuse an entry. ■ Enter by email only (please include all of the information requested in How to Enter panel) to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk

■ Prizes as stated (Okuma reserves the right to send alternatives).

■ No correspondence will be entered into.



SPYRO

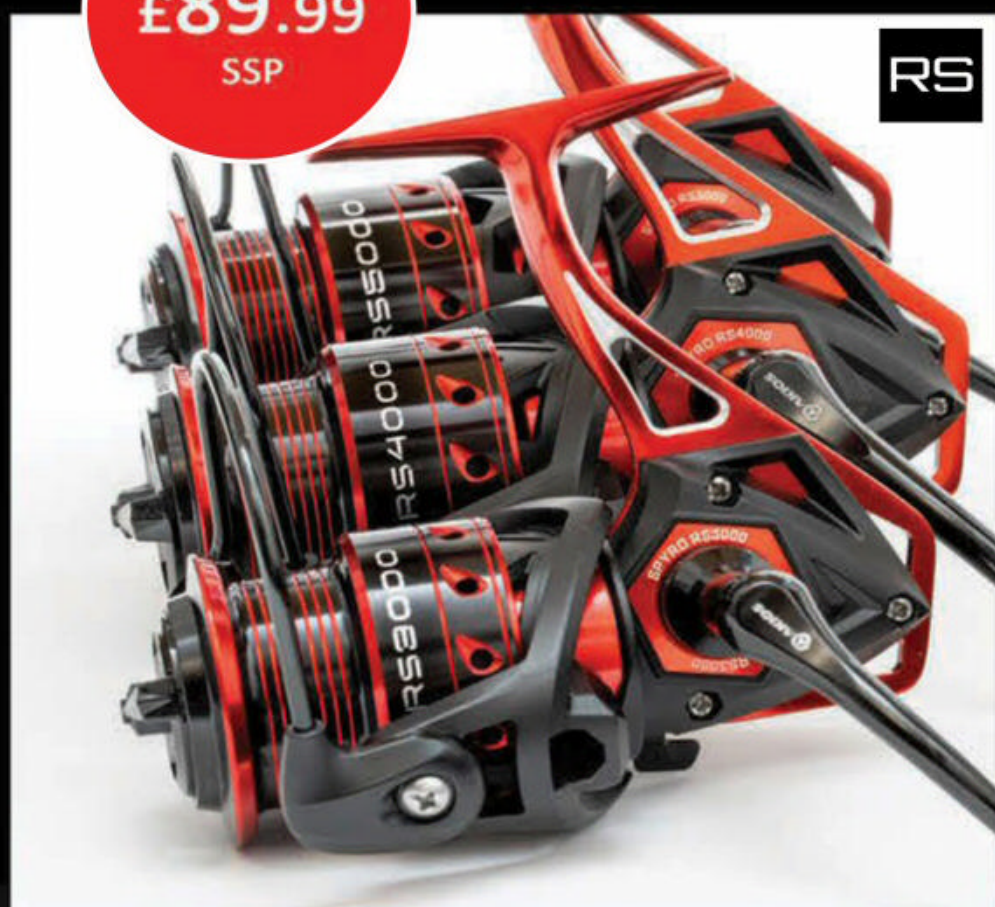
RS SERIES

- ULTRA RIGID CNC MACHINED ALUMINIUM BODY
- 8+1 STAINLESS STEEL WATERPROOF BALL BEARINGS
- POWERFUL 36LB CARBON DRAG SYSTEM
- SUPPLIED WITH DEEP & SHALLOW ALUMINIUM SPOOLS
- HOLLOW BAIL ARM WITH CERAMIC LINE ROLLER
- SIZES: 3000, 4000, 5000 & 6000

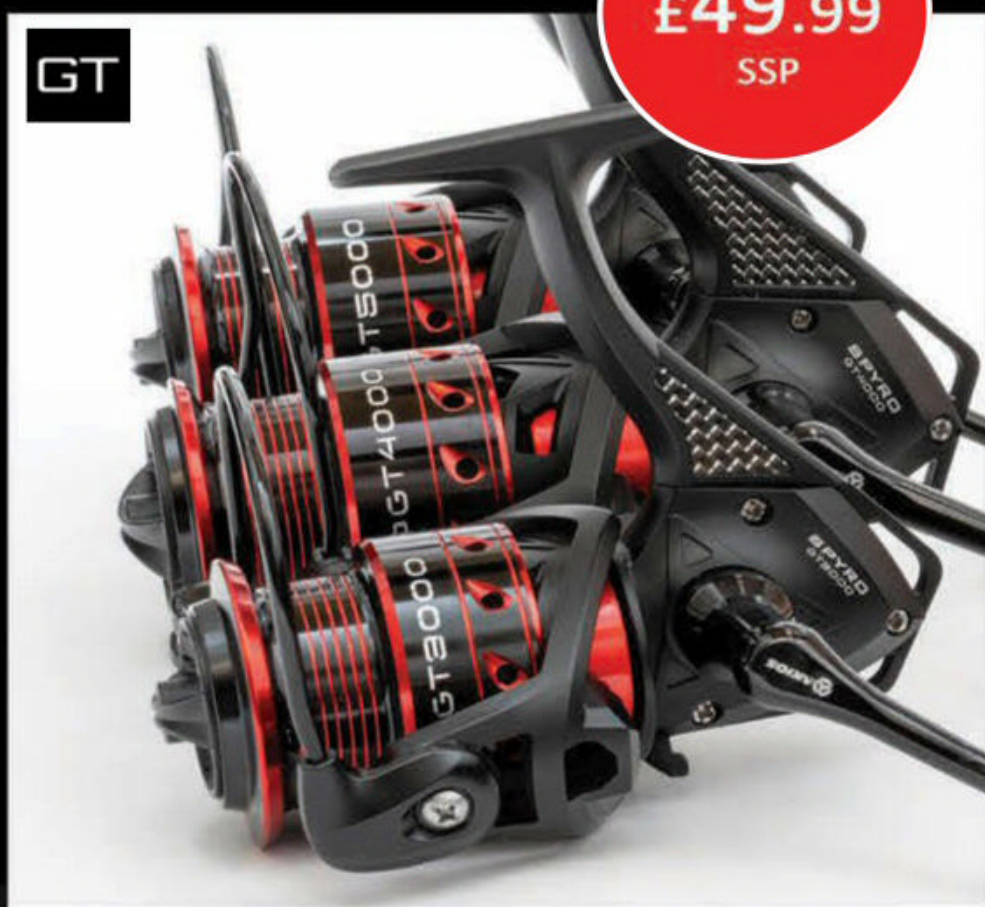
GT SERIES

- LIGHTWEIGHT CARBON COMPOSITE BODY
- 5+1 STAINLESS STEEL BALL BEARINGS
- POWERFUL 27LB DRAG SYSTEM
- SUPPLIED WITH DEEP & SHALLOW SPOOLS
- HOLLOW BAIL ARM WITH CHROMED LINE ROLLER
- SIZES: 3000, 4000, 5000 & 6000

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£89.99
SSP



FROM
£49.99
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G.Loomis

BASS LURE RODS

UK APPOINTED DEALER

IMX-PRO MAG BASS CASTING RODS

Bass casting rods designed for anglers that prefer the "Classic" Mag Bass actions. Full cork grips and Fuji reel seats with Fuji K-frame guides provide positive grip and balance along with positive control. Incredible performance means extreme sensitivity, ultra-light weight, excellent balance and unbelievable power and strength!

IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 6in 7-18g 1 Piece...£289.99
IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 6in 7-21g 1 Piece...£289.99

IMX-PRO BASS SPINNING JIG RODS

Bass spinning rods designed for anglers that prefer the "Classic" Spin Jig actions. Full cork grips and Fuji reel seats with Fuji K-frame guides provide positive grip and balance along with positive control. Incredible performance means extreme sensitivity, ultra-light weight, excellent balance and unbelievable power and strength!

IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 2-9g 1 Piece...£289.99
IMX Pro Mag Bass 7ft 4-10g 1 Piece...£289.99

SAVAGE GEAR

It's a savage world

"This is the first time I have been 100% involved with bass lure rods from initial ideas through to the finished products I am now fishing with."

Henry Gilbey

Svendsen teams up with Henry Gilbey & Mads Grosell...

Henry Gilbey & Mads Grosell have designed this amazing range of Bass rods, one of the most highly anticipated launches of 2021. Thousands of hours of testing & casting lures from the shore in various conditions have gone into the development of these rods & lures.

SG58 PRECISION LURE SPECIALIST RODS

Perfectly balanced rods made for distance and precision casting with lures from the shore. RRP NOW

SG58 9ft 9-35g 2 Piece	£319.99	£269.99
SG58 9ft 2in 9-35g 2 Piece	£339.99	£289.99
SG58 9ft 6in 9-35g 2 Piece	£329.99	£279.99
SG58 9ft 6in 12-46g 2 Piece	£349.99	£299.99

SG55 PRECISION LURE SPECIALIST RODS

Perfectly balanced rods made for distance and precision casting with lures from the shore. RRP NOW

SG55 9ft 9-35g 2 Piece	£164.99	£139.99
SG55 9ft 6in 9-35g 2 Piece	£169.99	£144.99
SG55 9ft 6in 12-46g 2 Piece	£179.99	£149.99

Fiish LEURES

Choice of over 100 Fiish Lures on our website

BLACK EEL

Khaki and Cloudy White with 40g lead head

BLACK MINNOW

Khaki, Blue and Gold / Blue 140 and 120 with lead heads of 40g and 25g

We also stock Candy Shrimp, Crazy Paddle Tail, Crazy Sand Eel, Mud Digger Accessories

see the 4 VIDEOS on our website

SAVAGE GEAR

It's a savage world

SALTWATER LURE REELS

SG56

Built with a strong, lightweight aluminum body and a Carbon Reinforced Composite rotor, the reel is designed to deliver top performance time and time again. Features 6+1 sealed steel ball bearings, high-performance carbon drag system and our proprietary Dura Grease - all of which combine to help make the reel saltwater resistant.

8 Models available - 4000, 5000, 6000, 8000, 10000, 14000, 14000H, 18000

£114.99 - £164.99

SG58

A reel with a unique coating that can easily withstand 500 hours of being sprayed with saltwater in testing. Savage Gear's new SG58 reel, complete with SW500 coating, is saltwater resistant in other ways too. Features sealed 6+1 steel ball bearings, sealed drag system, lightweight and strong aluminum body and Carbon Reinforced Composite rotor.

8 Models available - 4000, 5000, 6000, 8000, 10000, 14000, 14000H, 18000

£124.99 - £194.99

Fiish LEURES

Choice of over 100 Fiish Lures on our website

BLACK EEL

Khaki and Cloudy White with 40g lead head

BLACK MINNOW

Khaki, Blue and Gold / Blue 140 and 120 with lead heads of 40g and 25g

We also stock Candy Shrimp, Crazy Paddle Tail, Crazy Sand Eel, Mud Digger Accessories

see the 4 VIDEOS on our website

SAVAGE GEAR

It's a savage world

Working with Henry Gilbey, Savage have produced an amazing new range of soft plastics. Read his blog on our website

SANDEEL V2 SINKING LURES

New lure designed by Henry Gilbey

12cm 22g 2+1	£6.99
14cm 33g 2+1	£7.99
15.5cm 46g 2+1	£8.99
17.5cm 65g 2+1	£9.99
11.5cm 22g 2+1 Weedless	£8.99
13cm 31g 2+1 Weedless	£9.99

SANDEEL PENCIL SW SINKING LURES

The new Shallow Water version for 2021

9cm 13g	£7.99
12.5cm 19g	£9.99
15cm 30g	£10.99

DAIWA

BASS LURE RODS

Fishing rods for sea bass fishing

Sandstorm Bass Spinning Rods

- Premium Carbon Blanks
- Fixed Spool DPS Reel Seat
- Seaguide Deep Drawn Frame Guides with Aluminium Oxide Ring
- Split EVA Grip Handle

11ft 6in 28-84g RRP NOW £120 from £99

SALTIST - Bass Spinning Rods

- HVF High Volume Fibre
- X45 Technology

8ft 10-35g	RRP	NOW
8ft 10-35g	£170	£139
8ft 6in 10-35g	£175	£145
9ft 10-35g	£180	£149

SALTIST - Spinning Rods

10ft 14-60g	£145	£119
11ft 6in 28-84g	£150	£125

Whisker - Bass Spinning Rods

Designed to cover the multitude of fishing styles, across lure and bait with monofilament or braid

8ft Medium-Heavy 5-40g	RRP	NOW
8ft Medium-Heavy 10-40g	£170	£137.99
9ft Medium-Heavy 10-40g	£180	£141.99
10ft Heavy 10-60g	£190	£151.99
11ft Heavy 10-60g	£200	£159.99

DAIWA

"Nothing short of superb"

Sea Angler Review, June 2019

Read the review by **DAVID BARHAM** on our website

BG Magsealed Spinning Reel

7 Models - RRP £165-£210 from £139.99

Super Kenzaki FS (Fixed Spool) Boat Rod

6-12lb, 6-15lb, 12-20lb, 15-25lb, 20-30lb or 30-50lb 7', 7'6" or 8' RRP £170 £129.99

KENZAKI

SHIMANO

SALTWATER LURE REELS

VANFORD 13 MODELS	from £179.99
VANQUISH 9 MODELS	from £369.99
STELLA FK 14 MODELS	from £599.99
TWIN POWER FD 11 MODELS	from £299.99
TWIN POWER XDA 6 MODELS	from £334.99
TWIN POWER SW-C 11 MODELS	from £349.99
STELLA SW-C 14 MODELS	from £679.99

SHIMANO

SALTWATER LURE REELS

SO CORRO 4 MODELS	from £94.99
STRADIC C14+ 2 MODELS	from £154.99
STRADIC FL 11 MODELS	from £154.99
SPHEROS SW 3 MODELS	from £94.99
SPHEROS SW-A 8 MODELS	from £164.99
ULTEGRA FC 10 MODELS	from £124.99
SARAGOSA SW-A 8 MODELS	from £179.99

SHIMANO

STAND-UP BOAT RODS

Fishing rods for sea fishing

TLD - A Stand-Up Boat Rods

This rod is the perfect choice when you want to fish for big tuna or shark.

- XT60 + Biofibre blank
- Machined from marine grade aluminum and anodized to prevent corrosion.

1.67m 20lb	RRP	NOW
1.67m 20lb Roller	£114.99	£99.99
1.67m 30lb Roller	£189.99	£169.99
1.67m 50lb Roller	£194.99	£174.99
1.67m 80lb Roller	£194.99	£174.99

TYRNOS - A Stand-Up Boat Rods

- Ideal for UK Shark Fishing
- ALPS heavy duty SIC lined guides

1.65m 30lb	RRP	NOW
1.65m 30lb	£224.99	£199.99
1.65m 50lb	£234.99	£209.99
1.65m 80lb	£249.99	£234.99

TIAGRA - Hyper Stand-Up Boat Rods

- High pressure carbon blanks + AFTO guides
- Pacific Bay Reel Seat

1.75m 30lb	RRP	NOW
1.75m 30lb	£359.99	£329.99
1.73m 50lb Bent Butt	£379.99	£349.99
1.6m 80lb Bent Butt	£474.99	£439.99

TIAGRA - Ultra Game Stand-Up Boat Rods

Shimano's flagship trolling rod with the latest carbon technology - Spiral X + Hi Power X

5ft 4in 50lb	RRP	NOW
5ft 4in 50lb	£604.99	£579.99
5ft 4in 80lb	£604.99	£579.99

SHIMANO

BOAT REELS

Fishing reels for sea fishing

TLD 6 Models	from £109.99
TORIUM HG 2 Models	from £159.99
TYRNOS 6 Models	from £169.99
SpeedMaster LD II 4 Models	from £199.99
TIAGRA 4 Models	from £469.99

DAIWA

BOAT RODS

Fishing rods suitable for boat trips

Seahunter Z Boat Rods - 2 piece - 4 Models	from £54.99
Saltist Boat Rods - 2 piece - 3 Models	from £139.99
Tournament Boat Rods - 2 piece - 5 Models	RRP £185 from £149
Saltiga Boat Rods - 2 piece - 10 Models	from £199.99

AMAZING OFFER

DAIWA

BOAT REELS

Fishing reels for sea fishing

Sealine Sloss Boat reel	from £89.99
18 Saltist Boat reel	from £219.99
Saltist Level wind reel	from £199.99
20 Saltiga LD Single & 2 speed boat reels	from £369
16 Saltiga 40H & 50H Saltwater multiplier reels	RRP £520 NOW £299

AMAZING OFFER

anyfish anywhere™ Blue Label Range

These rods offer exceptional performance both in terms of casting and fishing at a price point that makes them very accessible.

four&bait rod mk2

Surfcasting Rods	RRP	PRICE
13ft 3-5oz Fixed Spool	£205	£179.99
13ft 3-5oz Multiplier	£205	£179.99
14ft 3-5oz Fixed Spool	£215	£189.99
14ft 3-5oz Multiplier	£215	£189.99

six&bait rod mk2

Surfcasting Rods	RRP	PRICE
13ft 5-7oz Fixed Spool	£235	£199.99
13ft 5-7oz Multiplier	£235	£199.99
14ft 5-7oz Fixed Spool	£245	£199.99
14ft 5-7oz Multiplier	£245	£199.99
15ft 5-7oz Fixed Spool	£255	£209.99
15ft 5-7oz Multiplier	£255	£209.99

anyfish anywhere™ PRO RED LABEL SERIES

The worlds first truly Professional standard beach fishing rods

NEW FOR 2022

Grand Prix Pro Mk2
This new slimmed down version is lighter by about 30% and has a 24mm butt + Reducer.
Multiplier 13ft 10in - Casts 4-7oz (150-200g) RRP £550 **NOW £469.99**

Estuary Rods MK2
11ft - Casts 30-100g RRP £220 **NOW £189.99**
12ft - Casts 30-100g RRP £225 **NOW £199.99**

Tournament GBFS Pro MK2
Fixed Spool 14ft + Reducer
Casts 4-8oz (112-225g) RRP £525 **NOW £459.99**

Tournament Match Pro MK2
Multiplier 13ft 11in + Reducer
Casts 4-7oz (125-200g) RRP £525 **NOW £469.99**

SHIMANO SURF RODS

Fishing rods for beach fishing

SPEEDMASTER Lite Rod + 2 Tips

- High Modulus Full Carbon + HPC blank with Nanosheet technology produces lighter, stronger blank with increased responsiveness & casting distance
- Fuji Fazlite K Type anti-tangle guides
- Fuji DPS reel seat
- Ultra sensitive solid tip design
- Extra fast action for increased tip speed when casting

13ft 120g / 4.25oz	RRP	NOW
	£194.99	£159.99

SPEEDMASTER - BXS Surf Rods

- HPC200+NANO technology

14ft Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£204.99	£164.99
14ft Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£204.99	£164.99
14ft Hybrid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£204.99	£164.99
14ft 6in Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£214.99	£174.99
14ft 6in Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£214.99	£174.99
14ft 6in Hybrid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£214.99	£174.99

SPEEDMASTER - Beach Rods

- High Modulus Full Carbon + HPC blank with Nanosheet technology produces lighter, stronger blank with increased responsiveness and casting distance.

14ft 9in Solid + 3 Tips 120g / 4oz	RRP	NOW
	£214.99	£179.99
15ft 5in Solid 150g / 6oz	RRP	NOW
	£214.99	£149

SHIMANO SURF RODS

Fishing rods for beach fishing

STC - Travel Surf Rods

- 6 Pieces
- Blank material: XT60 + NANO
- Reel seat: Shimano DPS
- Guide type: Shimano Stainless Steel Hardline
- Number of guides: 9
- Packaged in a hardcase tube

13ft 225g	RRP	NOW
	£224.99	£199.99
14ft 225g	RRP	NOW
	£249.99	£229.99

SURF LEADER ULTRA - BX Surf Rods

The flagship in surf casting rods with unbelievable distance casting ability

13ft 11in Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£484.99	£399.99
13ft 11in Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£484.99	£399.99
14ft 9in Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£484.99	£399.99
14ft 9in Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£484.99	£399.99

ULTEGA - BX Surf Rods

Hi-Power X construction for reduced blank twist and greater rod strength - a true casting machine

13ft 11in Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£299.99	£264.99
13ft 11in Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£299.99	£264.99
14ft 9in Tubular 225g	RRP	NOW
	£309.99	£269.99
14ft 9in Solid 225g	RRP	NOW
	£309.99	£269.99

SHIMANO SURFCASTING REELS

NEW

Aerlex 10000XSB Surf Casting Reel	Speedmaster 14000XS Reel	Ultegra XSD 5500 Surf Reel / Big Pit Reel	Ultegra 14000 XSD Reel	Ultegra XSE 10400 Reel	Ultegra C14+ 14000 XSC Reel
RRP £94.99	RRP £129.99	RRP £149.99	RRP £174.99	RRP £179.99	RRP £229.99
£69.99	£99.99	£129.99	£139.99	£159.99	£229.99

SHIMANO SURFCASTING REELS

NEW

Surfleader C14+ Reel	Power Aero 14000 XSB Reel	Fliegen 35SD Reel	Bull's Eye 9120 Surf Reel	Bull's Eye 9100 Surf Reel	Aero Technium MgS XSD 14000 Reel
RRP £284.99	RRP £379.99	RRP £419.99	RRP £379.99	RRP £379.99	RRP £619.99
£229.99	£319.99	£349.99	£349.99	£349.99	NEW FOR 2022 £619.99

DAIWA SURF REELS for 2022

Fishing reels for beach fishing

Shorecast - 5000B Fixed spool surf reel	Shorecast - 6000B Fixed spool surf reel	20 Crosscast 35 SCW 5000C QD Surf reel	20 Crosscast 45 SCW 5000C QD Surf reel	19 Emblem Surf 45 SCW QD Surfcasting reel	20 T Basia 45 SCW 5000C QD Surf reel
RRP £89.99	RRP £89.99	RRP £110	RRP £135	RRP £185	RRP £675
£79.99	£79.99	£89.99	£109.99	£159.99	£559.99

DAIWA MULTIPLIER SURF REELS

7HT Millionaire Tournament	7HT Millionaire Mag	7HT Millionaire Mag Super Tuned	SL20SH Sealine Sloss	SL30SH Sealine Sloss
RRP £210	RRP £375	RRP £560	RRP £130	RRP £130
£149.99	£269.99	£399.99	£89.99	£89.99

SONIK GRAVITY X5 HT

Unground carbon finish at rod joints makes it easier to take apart after use. White hollow carbon tip for easy bite detection in poor light conditions. Fuji corrosion control frames provide 7 times more corrosion resistance. Shrink wrap on the lower handle to improve grip whilst casting. Super lightweight high modulus carbon blank. XS multi-directional nanofibre tip section lay-up. Fuji Alconite K Series guides. Fuji DPS reel fitting.

It's an absolutely fantastic shore rod. 'The ultimate power is utterly immense and evident during the casting process' Paul Fenech - Sea Angler review issue 566 Jan/Feb '19

A true all rounder...

14ft - 5-7oz - 2 Piece	RRP	NOW
	£329.99	£249.99
15ft 4in - 4-8oz - 3 Piece	RRP	NOW
	£349.99	£259.99

DAIWA SURF RODS

Fishing rods for beach fishing

AIR SURF - Surf Rods

- SVF and X45
- Mega Top Carbon Hybrid Tip
- Guides: Fuji K Guide with Alconite (Multiplier)
- Guides: Fuji LC with Alconite (Fixed Spool)

13ft 6in Multiplier	2 Piece 4-8oz	RRP	NOW
		£480	£369.99
14ft 2in Multiplier	2 Piece 4-8oz	RRP	NOW
		£505	£389.99
15ft 3in Fixed Spool	3 Piece 3-7oz	RRP	NOW
		£525	£399.99

SALTIST - Surf Rods

12ft 6in Multiplier	100-200g	RRP	NOW
		£210	£169
13ft 6in Multiplier	100-200g	RRP	NOW
		£235	£189
14ft 2in Multiplier	100-200g	RRP	NOW
		£240	£195
14ft Fixed Spool	84-150g	RRP	NOW
		£245	£195
14ft Fixed Spool Hybrid 3-6oz	84-150g	RRP	NOW
		£255	£199
15ft Fixed Spool Hybrid 3-6oz	84-150g	RRP	NOW
		£270	£199

TOURNAMENT - PRO Surf Rods

11ft 6in Bass Fixed Spool	1-3oz	RRP	NOW
		£250	See Website
13ft 6in Multiplier	3-7oz	RRP	NOW
		£330	See Website
14ft 2in Multiplier	4-8oz	RRP	NOW
		£350	See Website

TOURNAMENT - HT Surf Rods

14ft Fixed Spool Hybrid 3-6oz	RRP	NOW
	£315	£249
15ft Fixed Spool Hybrid 3-6oz	RRP	NOW
	£335	£269

SONIK SURF REELS

SKS 8000 AVX 10,000 DOMINATOR X 10,000

Designed to give smooth long casts, the large handle helps to speed gear and fish back to the beach. RRP £49.99 **£39.99**

Superbly smooth & highly functional reel with slow oscillation & long cone spool for super smooth line lay and ultra-long distance casts. RRP £149.99 **£99.99**

Built to withstand the demands of harsh saltwater environments the massive 18kg micro adjust drag will cope with battling large fish in tough conditions... RRP £179.99 **£79.99**

AKIOS SURFCASTING REELS

Fishing reels for beach fishing

Fury FX8 Fixed spool reel	Fireloop Fixed spool reel	The Guvnor GUV GX8 Fixed spool surf reel	Air Loop R8 / R10 Long cast fixed spool reel	Utopia CX8 / SX8 Fixed spool reel	Ironloop AK100 Fixed spool reel
RRP £74.99	RRP £109.99	RRP £149.99	RRP £145.99	RRP £129.99	RRP £229.99
£64.99	£87.99	£99	£114.99	£114.99	£199

AKIOS FURY FX420

CONTINENTAL ROD + 3 PIECE

The AKIOS FURY is sure to set new standards, the rod looks and behaves fantastically being tested for over 6 months. The AKIOS FURY rod series offers unbelievable value! Made from high modulus carbon fibre, incorporating a spliced tip, SeaGuide quality guides and reel seats, it is a true GEM. It's sure to become a best seller's in the Surf market in the U.K. around Europe and further afield.

14'4.2m - 100-180g (4-6oz)	RRP	NOW
	£149.99	£129.99
15'4.6m - 100-180g (4-6oz)	RRP	NOW
	£149.99	£129.99

AKIOS ENDURANCE PRO RS2

A VERSATILE DUO... IN ONE!

3 PIECE (Plus extra tip section) 4.26m/14ft + 112-225g/4-8oz

Specifically designed for the modern shore angler that demands versatility without compromising on performance, the dual tipped AKIOS ENDURANCE PRO is built around a high modulus HMX40T carbon blank that generates a remarkable amount of casting power.

RRP	NOW
£269.99	£219.99

AKIOS AIRSPEED SURF 435 MKII BLACK EDITION

CONTINENTAL + 3 PIECE + 4.35m/14.6ft 112-225g/4-8oz

Striking looks that will turn the heads of envious anglers right along the beach, but more importantly, the outstanding casting performance will enable baits to be sent out further and cover a wider expanse of ground than ever before.

RRP	NOW
£379.99	£319.99

AKIOS AIRPOWER RXP 435

CONTINENTAL ROD + 3 PIECE + 4.35m/14ft 6in 120-225g/4-8oz

Arguably the most powerful three-piece continental style rod on the market, the AKIOS AIRPOWER has been designed with one thing in mind, to offer EXTREME casting capabilities. With its insanely powerful high modulus HMX46T carbon construction, progressive action and lightning fast recovery, the rod sets new standards for modern three-piece rods.

RRP	NOW
£439.99	£339.99

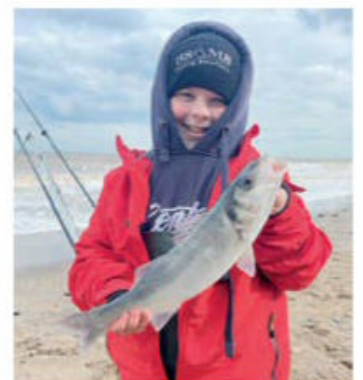
YOUNG RODS

Sea Angler's celebration of the great angling achievements of its many younger readers

In association with



▼ **Harley Thompson** from South Shields caught a 835g bass on the Yorkshire coast during the EBOC. He ended up 2nd on the Sunday event and was using was using his favourite Century Graphex Tiptornado Ultralight



Rose Adams, age nine, from Falkham in Kent caught these two thornback rays (10lb 7oz and 6lb) on April 3rd fishing from Grandad's boat out of Ramsgate. Both fish came using sardine fished on flowing trace.



◀ **Nine-year-old Harrison Parry** caught this bass on a north Cornwall beach over high tide. It was his first fish of the year and was caught on a lug bait on a paternoster rig. The fish was released straight away.



► **Maisey Compton**, aged 13, caught her very first plaice. It was caught on fresh lug at Brighton and weighed 1lb 2oz.

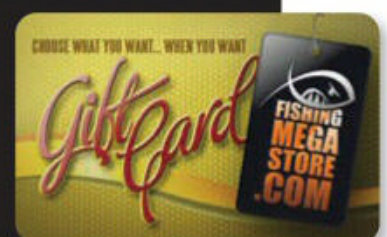


▲ **13-year-old Oliver Saunderson** with his first giant goby caught on a size 8 hook baited with bacon.



▲ **Rory Henry**, aged five, got his first dab on LRF gear in Port Patrick. It took a white Isome worm on a size 12 fly hook.

£25 TACKLE VOUCHER WINNERS



Fishingmegastore.com awards a £25 voucher prize to each of two winners - the youngster with the best shore fish and another with the top boat catch. The winners can use the voucher to select tackle from **Fishingmegastore.com** which is based in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

■ Send your Young Rods entries by email to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk

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ICELAND

TOP SEA FISHING CENTRES FOR BIG CATCHES

NORWAY

Due to
Huge Demand
Booking Now
For 2023!



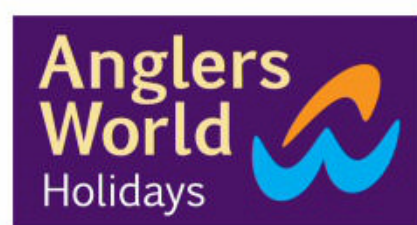
Talk to us about Norway 2022 & 2023

If sea fishing is running through your veins - Norway has it all. Stunning scenery, generally sheltered sea fishing, a huge choice of species and a chance to beat your personal best big cod, big halibut, coalfish or wolffish as well as many other species.

Talk to us about Iceland 2022 & 2023

Expect prolific fishing with the chance of really big cod, coalfish, wolffish and occasional big halibut. Haddock and flatties are abundant too. Top action on pirks and big shads. Iceland offers one of the best value destinations in Scandinavia. An excellent value destination.

2022/23 SELLING OUT FAST - TALK TO US TODAY!



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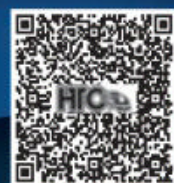
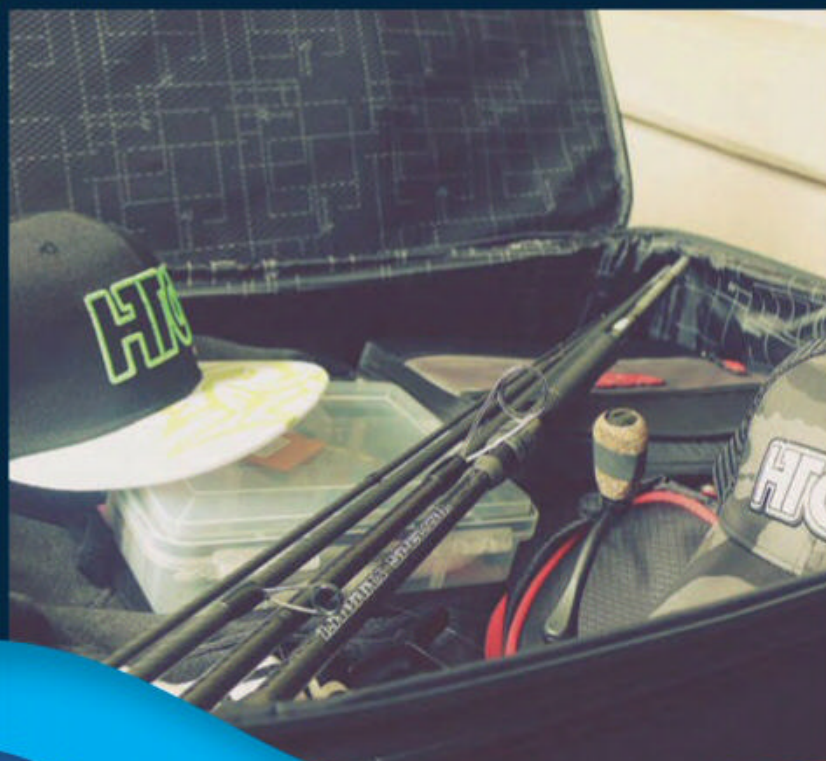


N70 LABRAX SPECIAL TRAVEL

Harness the power of the N70 Labrax Special on your travels. This four-piece travel rod is built on the same extra fast action blank as the original two-piece N70, giving you a strong, light, crisp rod that can be taken anywhere in the world. Constructed from 40-ton carbon with an M4 resin and helical carbon tape wrap, few travel rods compare. The punchy blank will cast lures to incredible distances, maintain pinpoint accuracy and give you the control to stop the most combative fish. Whether you're a seasoned overseas traveller or are seeking maximum performance in a compact footprint, the N70 Labrax Special Travel has it all.

TORZITE® **winn**

LENGTH	SECTIONS	CASTING WEIGHT	WEIGHT	PACKDOWN	SSP
2.85m / 9'4"	4	7-42g	126g	81cm	£479.99



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TURNING FAILURE INTO SUCCESS

Blank sessions can be dispiriting until you see them as an essential part of learning from your mistakes on the way to becoming a better angler

There is one thing that connects us anglers more than any other; we all taste the bitterness of failure at times, and it hurts like hell. If you're an avid angler, like me, you look forward to the coming session all week; it's what gets you through your day job and the chores and responsibilities at home. We spend numerous hours planning, making rigs, sourcing the best bait, and dreaming of what we may catch. I often couldn't sleep the night before a session on Dorset's Jurassic coast. It didn't matter whether it was lure or bait, I would lie awake, simulating the session in my mind, almost willing it to be sensational. Of

course, expectations and reality are two very different things. Our hopes and dreams are often scattered like a million stars in the night sky. I used to fish these marks in Dorset that would involve an hour walk each way, carrying over 50lb in gear, and they would often involve a climb. I can remember vividly the hikes back to the car; they were devastating. You'd fished all night long, given it everything, and had zero to show for it. Your heavy legs lumbering and rucksack straps cutting into your shoulders like barbed wire. I'd be hating the world. The sea is a cruel mistress; it teases, tantalises and torments the passionate angler who strives to succeed. I've found these emotions are often compounded when on trips away, particularly in Norway, when expectations are enormous. The failures

can crush the spirits of even the best of us. At times like this, a whole host of encouraging sayings are music to our ears, helping us cope with the failure.

THE JOURNEY

We've all heard the saying, 'It's not how many times you get knocked down that defines you but how many times you get back up', or 'every cast you make takes you closer to that special fish'. Both quotes are a little vague but are absolutely true on one level. We're designed to suffer and struggle; it's what makes success all the sweeter. It simply wouldn't be the same without the sour. It has occurred to me that perhaps happiness is about the journey, not the actual attainment; we feel good working toward our goals. The blanks ►



sessions, while frustrating, are an essential part of the journey. After failure, we have a bite to eat, a good sleep, and it hurts a little less. Sure, we are vague when the wife asks how we got on, and we swerve the overly chirpy neighbour, who seems far too happy in the mornings to be a normal bloke.

Then we face social media, where there is a queue of haters who are hoping you caught nothing. They are the wrong kind of friends or acquaintances to have. However, they can be fuel and inspiration for the next session. As the days pass, we feel our energy and enthusiasm replenish. Before long, we are planning another session and dreaming of that special fish all over again, and we've gone full circle.

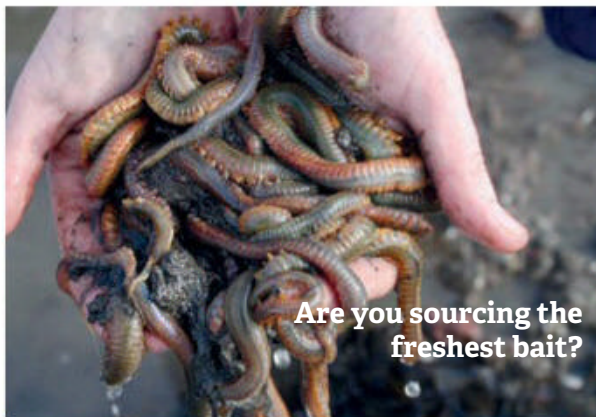
LEARN FROM MISTAKES

Napoleon Bonaparte once stated his definition of madness was, 'people doing the same thing over and over, yet expecting different results'. In my humble opinion, as a lifelong angler, he's 100 per cent right. How many anglers do we see doing the same thing, time and time again, and failing? They lament the fish not being in front of them. While we all turn up at venues and have a quiet night, as the fish just aren't feeding, it's often a better idea to assume that it's your fault that you're not catching and to look inward. I am very introspective and self-critical; on the walk back from every poor session, I question everything. Could I have done things better and had a different result? Many anglers don't do this, and as a result,

Success comes from watching and learning from others



Are you sourcing the freshest bait?



the poor nights far outnumber the good ones. The situation only becomes apparent when a decent angler fishes next to you when you're in a poor run of form. You blank, and he has three double-figure fish next to you, just 30 yards to your right. Those, mostly in denial, will believe the person next to them was on some lucky streak. I prefer to think that they just had their act together and performed optimally. I have been on the receiving end of such a drubbing, and it's humiliating as hell. I've also dished a few out, with guys next to me scratching their heads, casting in anger at the sea. I never choose to believe in luck. I prefer to think the successful angler just performed better. This may not always be true, but it benefits you to check that you're doing everything right.

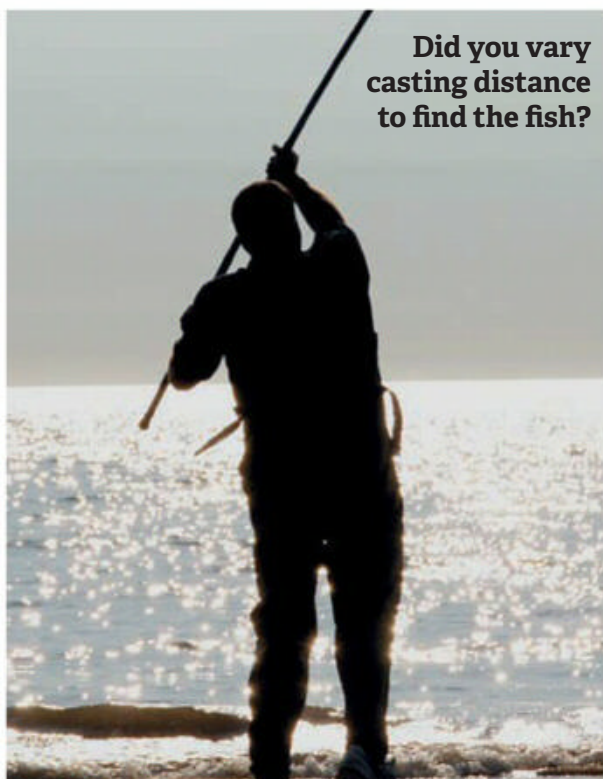
As anglers, it's very easy for us to drift off our game. We just start doing something slightly different or become a little lazier. This is far more likely as we become tired or enthusiasm wanes. If we lack belief and confidence, we can also lose sight of what we were doing when at the top of our game.

BAIT

Were you baiting up every 10-15 mins? or was it more like 20-30-minutes? There is a reason why a lot of the best match anglers bait up every 10 minutes and have rigs hanging on their tripod ready to be cast out; a fresh scent trail really attracts fish. If you're leaving baits out for 30 minutes, they're washed out; the scent trail will be minimal or non-existent, you're fishing

Is your lure choice imitating the bait fish present?





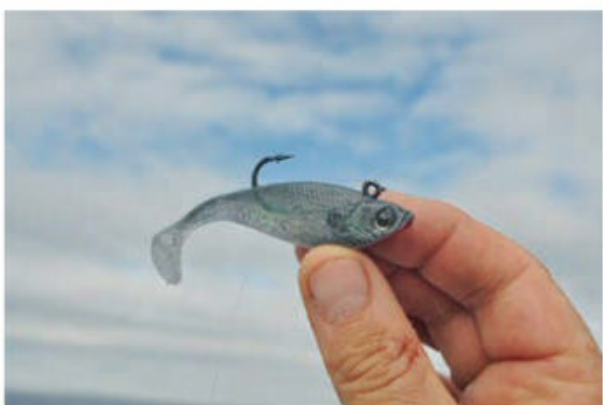
at a disadvantage. If your form has dipped, and you're struggling to find fish, bait up to a stopwatch as if it's a match.

Are you sourcing the best bait – the freshest, highest quality you can lay your hands on? I've watched plenty of top anglers either collect their bait or, at the very least, carefully inspect it at the shop. If your mackerel has been thawed out three times and refrozen, do you think you'll catch as many fish as the guy next to you who has just feathered for fresh ones?

Are you fishing with a bait that is naturally occurring at that venue at that time of year? If you're using crab and there are no crabs on the seabed, and the guy next to you is using fresh squid when the sea is full of live squid, do you think you have the same chance of catching? I've gone ray fishing at a time of year when herring is prevalent and caught three rays while pals fishing either side of me have blanked, mystified as to why. They had squid, sandeel, cuttlefish and mackerel; I had herring and that's what the fish were taking. It really does pay off to have a selection of fresh baits; you'll attract more fish. Also, don't be afraid to use cocktails of different baits.

LURES

You could make a similar argument about lures. If you have lures that mimick the small fish present at that time of year at a venue, you probably increase your chances of a fish versus someone using a colour scheme that won't be effective until later in the year. We've all seen that lure fishing, a guy catching bass for fun



while nobody else was catching. That successful chap often has a selection of lures and keeps switching things up. While we're on the topic of lure fishing, how many casts is the chap next to you making versus you? Is he covering more ground? Is he fishing over specific features? What sort of action does the lure have that's finding the fish? How quickly is he retrieving? It's all worth considering. If you've had a blank session use it as an opportunity to learn what hasn't worked so you can avoid making the same mistake again and improve your chance of success next time.

PRESENTATION

If you're bait fishing and blank, consider the following: were your fish baits immaculately presented and your hooks proud? When you reeled them back in, did they still look okay and were they untouched? If not, you might need to be using more elastic. Were your rigs suitable for the tidal conditions? If your bait was flapping 6ft off the bottom in a strong tide, was it going to be as effective as someone else's which was pinned to the bottom where the rays like to feed? These are all considerations that allow a blank to be used as an opportunity to become a better angler next time.

HOOKS

Are you sharpening your hooks? If you're dragging hooks across shingle or stony ground, they'll get blunt, quickly, no matter how sharp they came out of the packet. Next time, check how sharp they are after each cast. If they need changing or need a few strokes of a diamond file, do it, don't be lazy. If you're not connecting with fish, a razor-sharp 6/0 will still get you smaller fish if that point is filed properly. All good anglers check their hooks are sharp; it's a vital component in successful fishing.

CASTING

Do you vary your casting distances? There is little point in casting 150 yards if the fish are five yards out. Match anglers constantly vary their distances until they find the fish. If the angler next to you can cast further and is catching fish, don't keep doing the same thing; get yourself to a casting instructor, and improve that part of your game. If you were bass fishing and kept missing bites net time keep the rod in your hand and leave the tripod at home.

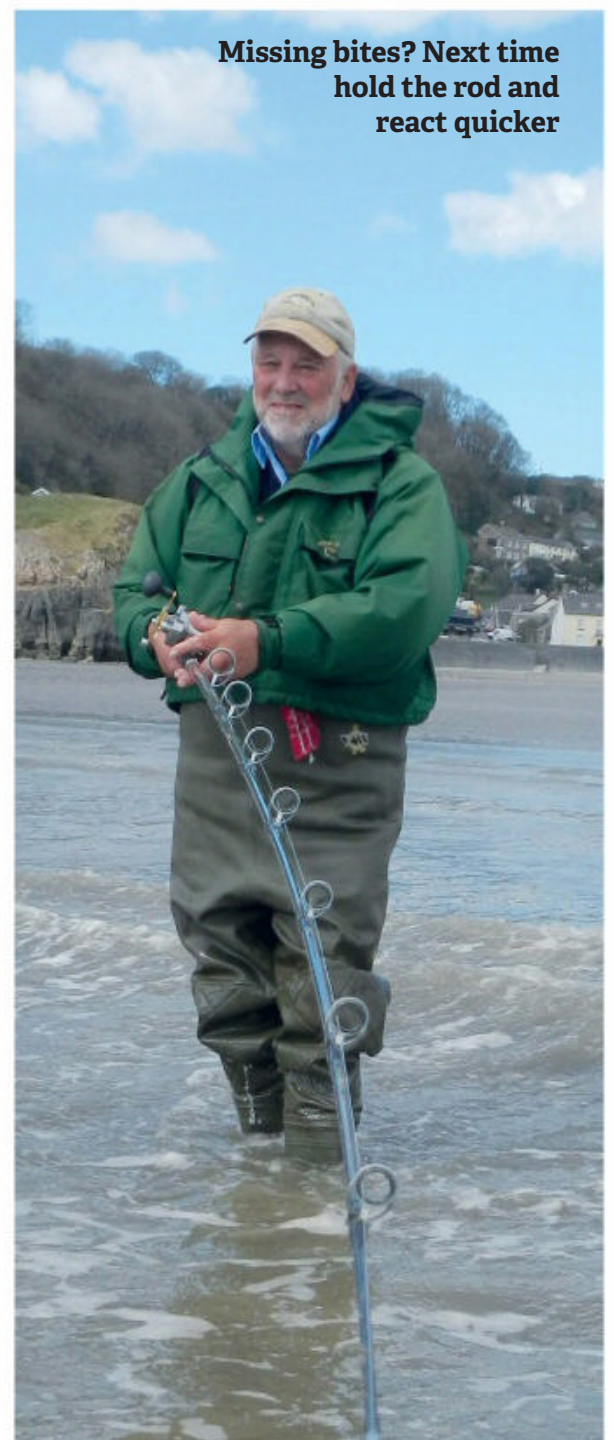
TIDES

If you're not succeeding, you need to learn from your errors, adapt, and see blanking as an essential component of becoming a successful angler. Choose your tides carefully. If you've never caught on a northeasterly and always done pretty well on south-westerlies at a venue, stick to those conditions for that place. Don't flog yourself to death, wasting bait and energy when you could use your time more effectively. Head for a venue where you know fish are coming out or where you've done well on those same tides

and conditions previously. Don't create long odds for yourself, as your chances of pulling yourself out of a rut will decrease dramatically.

My best advice is don't keep making the same mistakes. Evaluate what you are doing wrong and focus on how you can improve your performance. When you get out for a session, get all the things mentioned above right and fish hard, as if your life depends on it. If there are fish in front of you, you'll catch, confidence will build, and before long, you'll get into a streak where you feel you can't fail.

Remember, social media isn't an accurate reflection of how well someone is fishing; it's only an image of what they choose to post and show you. Some of these anglers we think of as heroes might be fishing four or five times per week for that one double-figure fish. They might be driving hundreds of miles. But from their social media feed you'd be forgiven for thinking they catch every time they go out and never have a blank session. They are human and have blanks just like you and I, drifting in and out of form. Focus on yourself and make your blank sessions essential lessons in becoming a better sea angler. Fishing requires tremendous perseverance and patience. It's the struggle and difficulty that leaves us constantly wanting more. I wouldn't have it any other way. ■



READER STORY

PITCH BLACK BASS

Reader, Steve Baxter, recounts a successful first foray into lure fishing at night

I'm not new to fishing. I've have been fishing for over 20 years as a hobby to relax and get away from the grind. But I've only really taken my fishing seriously over the last five years, particularly lure fishing for bass on the north Cornish coastline.

After reading an article in Sea Angler and speaking to a few fellow local fishermen, I was shocked to hear of people catching big bass at night with lures. This really piqued my interest because in the summer here in Cornwall it's hard to fish during daylight hours, what with the hordes of tourists, numerous watercraft, and swimmers and surfers in the water and on the beaches making it hard to fish. As a result, I mainly fish off the numerous rock marks.

However, a fishing pal of mine and I decided

to try at night for bass at our local beach. We met at the car park at 12am in pitch black. The wind was south westerly (a good wind generally for here) and the swell was semi clean, slightly messed up, with waves of around 3ft, with the odd 4ft set.

INTO THE NIGHT

We headed to the middle of the beach, waders on, with blue 35g Sidewinder lures (whether that matters in the dark, I don't know) on a Penn lure rod matched with a 4500 Penn reel loaded with braid and shock leader. The first hour was uneventful, it was mid-tide on the ebb and I was starting to lose a bit of concentration and drift off in my thoughts. I was chopping and changing

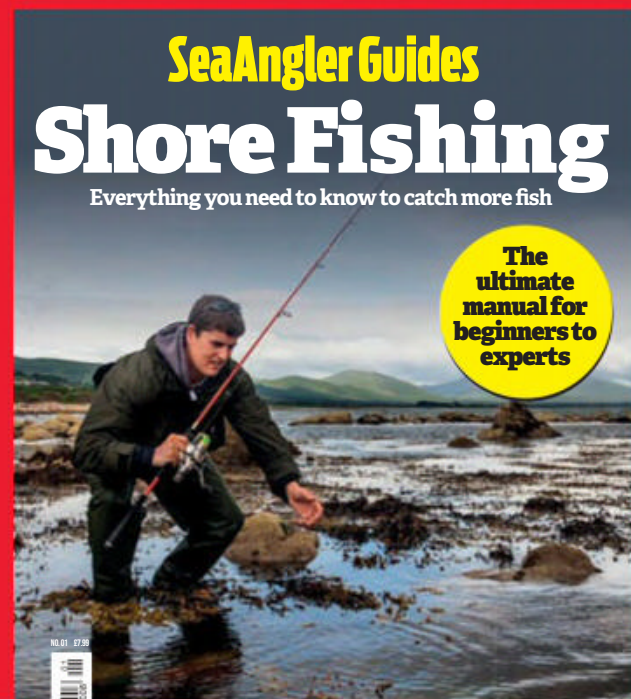
One of four bass Steve caught on his maiden night lure fishing session. This one went home with him.



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After reading an article in Sea Angler and speaking to a few fellow local fishermen, I was shocked to hear of people catching big bass at night with lures.

my retrieves from fast to slow, stopping and then retrieving rapidly, but still not much was happening.

I decided to try turning side on as the swell was almost knocking me over and I found the side stance was more stable. I also turned my rod to the side more too and retrieved at a medium pace keeping tension on the line and a slight bend in the tip. All of a sudden, 'bang'; my rod arced, and the line started to run out to sea. This was a good fish! I'd left a bit too much drag on my reel and was excitedly trying to get my line back and tighten my drag at the same time – not an easy feat when battling swell and a decent fish!

Then the fish decided to change direction and head back towards the beach, and me, at a fast pace. Now I was really struggling to gather up the slack. This fish was smart and definitely smarter than me. He ended up a few meters away from me where I got my first glimpse of a shimmering silver bass and a big one! It was hard to tell the size because of the almost darkness and trying like a fool the reel the slack line in. The fish looked at me, thrashed, and managed to throw the hook and disappear into the night.

I was gutted. My friend, who was a bit further up, had seen the action and came over to help but could see by my face when he got close that I'd lost possibly the fish of a lifetime. Swearing under my

breath, and feeling very sorry for myself, I cast out for another 45 minutes with no joy. I waded back to shore, beaten, telling myself I was a kook for the drag debacle and not walking backwards once I'd hooked the fish; all amateur errors and the result of getting over excited. I walked down to my friend and told him I was going home. He had no luck at all but he said, 'let's just head down the north end for a bit as it's now getting towards low tide'. Reluctantly I said yes because I didn't want my bad luck to affect him and us both give up. We got to the north end and waded out about 50 yards from each other. Two casts in and, using the same technique I'd used on the lost bass, 'bang!' I had another good fish, this time I was ready – drag set tight enough and slowly I walked back while retrieving! I ended dragging a 68cm bass up the beach and once I knew he was landed, gave a hoot and did a dad dance. I ended up catching three more of similar size in the space of 45 minutes and, unbelievably, my friend who was 50 yards away did not get a sniff. We even swapped places at one point, and I caught and he didn't. Who knows why? Don't feel too sorry for him. He ended up catching bigger, and more, bass than me over the summer. I was so pleased. It's not often you get to make up for a lost fish in the same session. I kept a medium size one and gave another medium size one to my pal; we always share our catch when possible. The rest went back, especially the big one, and we headed for home.

This has now ignited my passion for lures at night and I can't wait to target other species this spring, summer and autumn too. ■

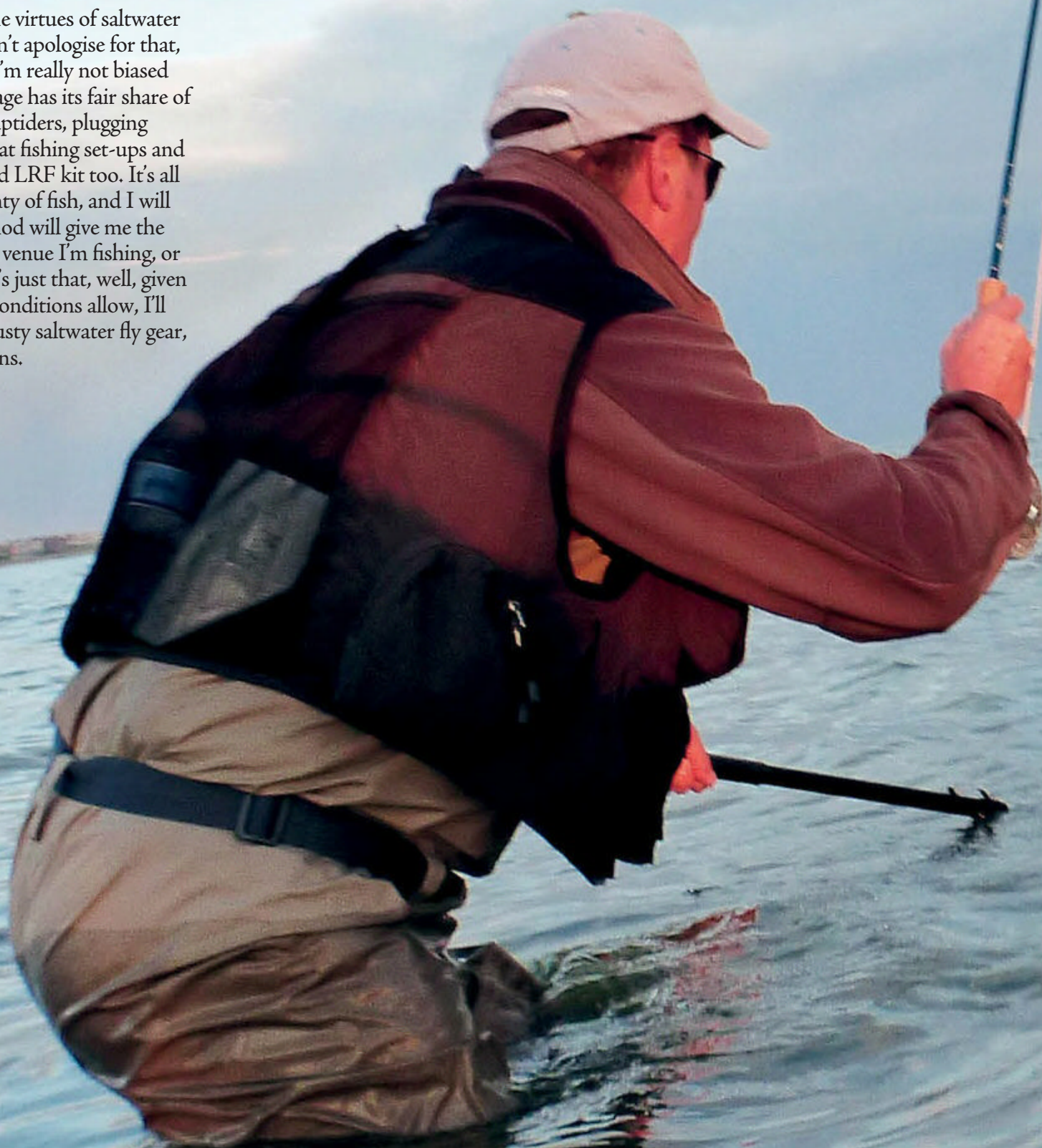




5 REASONS TO TRY THE FLY

Joe walker is hooked on saltwater fly fishing. His five reasons to try it will get you swiffing in no time too!

I like to extoll the virtues of saltwater flyfishing; I don't apologise for that, and honestly, I'm really not biased either. My garage has its fair share of beachcasters, uptiders, plugging rods, spinning gear, float fishing set-ups and more latterly, HRF and LRF kit too. It's all good, it all catches plenty of fish, and I will employ whatever method will give me the best enjoyment for the venue I'm fishing, or the species I'm after. It's just that, well, given the choice, and when conditions allow, I'll always reach for my trusty saltwater fly gear, and for five good reasons.



TRAVEL LIGHT



I guess the majority of us have spent more hours than we'd like to count yomping across the sand and shingle expanses of our local shores, often laden like a packhorse with beach gear, knees and various other joints creaking, groaning and wondering what on earth they'd done to deserve such abuse. Then there's those summer months when the opportunity arises to go fishing on the rocks. The full kit is not an option, so you scale it all back and there's an undeniable sense of freedom at losing the aching shoulders and prickle of sweat on the walk from the car. For me, those days rock-hopping along the Dorset coast set me on a path. I started to scale down the rods and tackle too, and the upshot was that I covered more ground, found places much

more lightly fished (if ever!) and achieved greater success and sport as a result. Even the fish themselves gave a better and better fight as the tackle got lighter. Frankly, it's hard then to go back. Bait fishing on the bottom turned to float fishing, which turned to plugs, which turned to light spinning and ultimately lead to me picking up a fly rod. I recall wafting it about at the dealers and giving it the obligatory ritual 'wibble' before breaking into an involuntary grin and declaring to the rest of the shop that this was what I called travelling light!

The sense of freedom that fly fishing gives is truly hard to beat. A reasonable fly rod weighs mere ounces and a fly reel also runs in at much less than your average fixed spool. Everything else you need can be reduced to literally a pocketful if you're savvy. Of course, you can, and may need to, scale up a bit when circumstances dictate, as you may need waders and a landing net possibly, but that depends on the venue and ultimately

where the fish are in relation to your access to the water's edge. Exploring the shore armed with super-lightweight swiffing gear is a joy. Saltwater flyfishing is an active, moving experience, rarely static, but you will see more, find more, and catch more fish than you would by staying in one place. What's more, fly rods pack down small, they love being tucked in the boot of the car, with everything you need in a small box, permanently primed and ready to go. It's a 'see fish, go fish' set up, and I for one love the ability to grab opportunities to catch at a moment's notice; fish for an hour and scoot off, without feeling like I have to be qualified to run the Royal Logistics Corps beforehand. Of course, if you're happy with a comfy seat in your beach buddy and enjoying a nice pasty whilst waiting for that smoothhound to Hoover up your peeler, then there's absolutely nothing wrong with that, and I do happily partake of the same. But do only that and, in my opinion, you're missing out!



FEEL THE POWER!

How many of you hold the line within your fingertips to detect a bite when you're not sure if there's some interest in your bait? Chances are, almost everyone at some point. Even in this age of braid and low-stretch lines there's still no substitute for concentrating on detecting that tell-tale fishy twitch and tug transmitted down the line which is just that little bit different from the regular movement of the waves, or lazy pull of weed around your leader. When you tune into that, you certainly catch more fish. Why? Fly fishing relies almost entirely upon that direct contact with the fish, which is amplified still further by the close proximity and complete lack of any superfluous weight and terminal tackle. It's literally: you, line, fish. As you draw your cast in by hand (called stripping) to impart life to your fly, or get it where you want it, every little movement of your fly can be felt as it makes its journey through the current

or water column. So, the sudden solid yank of a hungry bass, even a schoolie, will give a real jolt of adrenaline!

A fly fisherman can decide to play a fish one of two ways; either 'off the reel', meaning once you've felt the take and struck, you can quickly wind any slack line onto the reel and play the fish against the clutch. Alternatively, you can leave the line off the reel and retrieve and give line under tension purely by hand. To some extent it depends on the size of the fish, but I'll say this – the feel of the power and strength a fish has is increased exponentially when you're playing it by hand! I see fellow swiffers laughing and whooping out loud with the sheer joy and surprise a three pound mullet or pollack can generate when it refuses to yield and makes a run for freedom! Swiffing is never, ever about merely cranking a fish in. In this respect there is literally no other method that can generate the same extraordinary feeling, and it can transform your appreciation of every single fish you catch.





HAVE A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

As we've touched on the subject of the 20-yard cast, let's expand on that. Picking up a flyrod is quickly going to bring you into really close proximity to fish. When so much effort and time is expended in equipping ourselves and learning to propel baits to the horizon, it is astonishing to learn just how much activity is going on right under very rod-tip of your beachcaster! Learning the watercraft puts you into a different frame of mind when it comes to seeking your targets. Rather than looking out, you will find the level of your gaze dropping considerably and you will spot movement you've never seen before within yards of the shore. The thrill of stalking a shoal of huge mullet through the shallows in 18 inches of water or spotting the black flash of a large gar just off the rocks at your feet, or the incredible experience of standing in the middle of a big shoal of bass or mackerel, busting baitfish just below surface all around you, is amazing! I have stood in one spot and snapped out casts to feeding bass that completely surrounded me, catching fish after fish, and actually watched them surge forward and attack the fly just as I lift the rod to recast. I've even had them propel themselves skywards in attempt to grab my fly after it's left the water! Feeding fish literally under your rod-tip. You can't get any closer than that!





LEARN THE CRAFT

Lure anglers will understand where I'm coming from on this point to some extent, but swiffing takes it even further. It's simple really; the fish won't come to you – you have to go to them. There's a lot of water out there, so to take up the challenge and reap the rewards of swiffing, you have no choice but to develop your understanding of fish behaviour and their environment. Unless you're literally a superhuman being, you won't be casting flies 160 yards like a decent baitcaster, or even 60 yards like a lure. Chances are that it'll be more like 20-25 yards as an average, so you need to make it count. Your eyes will become the key to your success – study the terrain at low tide, understand what draws in the food that attracts your quarry and exactly what that food is, and spend time finding and then just watching the fish before you so much as wet a line. As the puzzle comes together, so your success rate will rise and eventually soar. And what's brilliant about it is that once you understand the 'watercraft' and can see the features, subtle currents and patterns that dictate when and where the fish feed, you can apply it to all the other methods you use and increase your catches across the board! Swiffing essentially encourages you through necessity to hone skills that otherwise may never be as fully developed, and it can be a revelation!



MIY – MAKE IT YOURSELF!



There's possibly only one way to get any more enjoyment out of catching a fish on the fly, and that's to catch it on a fly you've made yourself. Of course, there's absolutely nothing to stop you buying flies; there's lots to choose from, the quality is good and, they are rarely more than a couple of quid at the most, so you can certainly build up a great collection. But I have to be honest, after a while you'll find that the range of patterns you come to rely on is actually pretty small, and they can be disarmingly simple. So, why not 'tie' them yourself? The basic clouser, deceiver, rays mullet fly, and DNA baitfish are really easy to reproduce, even for someone with bad eyesight and fat thumbs like me. Heck, my fishing buddy Steve even manages it with half an index finger missing! Fly tying vices can be stupidly expensive, but you can also pick up basic ones which are perfect for saltwater flies for as little as £15, and that's all you'll need. There are a few other tools (scissors, a bobbin for thread, a tool for 'whip-finish' the flies) that you'll need but again, the cost is minimal. The actual material required to tie every fly imaginable are freely available and you can build up your range gradually as you get just what you need for each

style of fly one by one, and you'll get stacks of flies from each lot. In terms of how, there are books, courses and clubs, but YouTube offers a myriad of accessible instructional videos to follow, which makes learning very easy.

At the end of the day, tying your own flies is fun in its own right, and allows you to experiment almost infinitely with creating flies of your own design. It's fantastic when a variant of your own design starts to outfish other flies (the first fish you catch on a fly you've tied yourself is always a special moment) and then other swiffers will curiously peer over your shoulder to see what you're using. Plus, you get to name it! What a buzz when you 'invent' a fly, word gets around, and before you know it, the little creation you christened is being published in magazines and sold on the shelves – it happens all the time.

Finally, the biggest buzz of all is the one you get from stringing all of the above together. Five compelling reasons to try the fly – give it go. It really will transform the way you think about all of your sea angling in one way or another.





BLASTS FROM THE PAST



PART TWO: In the second part MIKE MILLMAN recalls a unique bream, more of the South West's record breakers and the anglers doing it for themselves

Norman Cowley's 96lb 10oz electric ray caught in 1975

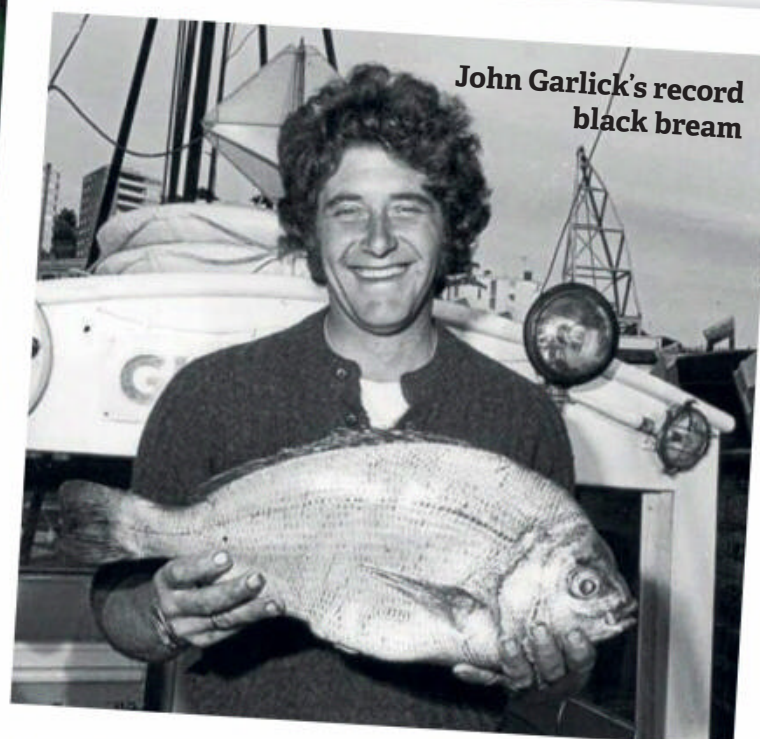


The specimen I rate above all others is a Mevagissey fish caught from the boat OSPREY in 1974. It was a red bream of 9lb 8oz 12dr taken off the Dodman Point, an area of reef that had over the years produced a considerable number of significant fish.

Only one other red bream in the class at 9lb 6oz has been registered, this was off an Irish boat called Valencia in 1963. Unfortunately, no picture exists in the Irish Sea Fish records but the weight is recorded. The previous British Record was another Cornish fish of 7lb 8oz caught in 1925 at the Hatt Rock reef south of Fowey by the then Secretary of the British Sea Anglers Society.

POLLACK

The great majority of record pollack and coalfish that were caught in the heyday of electronic wrecking fell to artificial lures. Alex Ingram experimented with artificial eels for a number of years at his home in Mevagissey before introducing the Mevagissey Eel in the



John Garlick's record black bream



Three of Mike's photos that made covers of Sea Angler over the years

late 1950s. Over time this became the famous 172 mm 'RedGill'. Eventually, on receipt of the bodies from an injection moulder, they were finished off and spray painted in a wooden hut in his garden. Despite the eel's success it was never more than a cottage industry.

1987 was the year a pollack of 29lb 4oz taken off Dungeness became the British Record; the first time in its history it had left the waters of the South-West and now, over three decades later, it has still to be seriously challenged. Before this, between 1921 and 1987, seven men held the record. The first incumbent was a fish of 21lb taken at rough ground off Lands End in a massive catch in 1921 and repeated the following day when the same angler set a record for the coalfish. The rarity of pollack in the 20lb class is such it was not until 1955 that a fish of 22lb 8oz was caught at the Hatt Rock Reef off Fowey. Two years later, at the Pells Reef off north Cornwall's Trevose Head, the record went up to 23lb 8oz. This was the last to be set at rough ground due to the arrival of electronics which opened up the wreck fishing era and swiftly brought about a massive change to the existing British Record list.

In 1972 at a wreck off Plymouth the record was pushed to 25lb but the expectation of it being broken again, quite quickly, proved false and 11 years passed before a wreck in the Hurd Deep provided a 26lb 7oz specimen. The following year the record was improved by 7oz in the same area and a short while later became 27lb 6oz from a boat drifting the edge of the Hurd Deep in the vicinity of the wreck of the submarine HMS Affray that tragically went to the bottom on the 16th April 1951 with the loss of all hands. ►



Barry Sokell's record flounder of 51lb 7oz in 1994



Mike's 23lb
4oz pollack

COALFISH

1921 was the year of the first record coalfish. Weighing 23lb 8oz it was taken at a mark off Sennen Cove and recorded by the then secretary of the British Sea Anglers Society, F.D. Holcombe, in his book *Modern Sea Angling*, published the same year. The formation of the Record Fish Committee was decades in the future and it was the likes of the Society who ensured that fish reported to them had sufficient credibility to be acclaimed as records. A Lyme Bay wreck fished in 1971 produced the next record of 26lb 2oz officially ratified by the British Record Fish Committee that came into being in 1957; so began a record breaking era that was continued until 1986 when a fish of 37lb 5oz from the Hurd Deep became the current record. In the period between 1921 and 1989 the coalfish record was improved no less than 10 times. Soon after the last was set the coalfish virtually disappeared from the waters of the South West, a rise in water temperature being considered the most likely reason. It is a classic case of nature giving and then taking away.

LING

In 1912 the Wolf Rock Reef off Lands End provided a fish of 45lb accepted by the British Sea Anglers Society as the first record for the species. Ling caught at the nearby Seven Stones Reef had weighed up to 70lb (gutted) but this is far short of a well-documented fish caught in a trawl in 1853 that weighed 124lb. It was said to have been sold, with no long distance transportation available, for one shilling on the Newlyn Quay.

It was on a cold winter day in January 1974 when a ling just one pound heavier was taken at a wreck more than 30 miles from the Devon coast. Less than a month later the weight was decisively beaten by a fish of 50lb 8oz at a wreck off Plymouth. It remained so until August 1957 when a wreck in the Western Approaches produced an immense specimen of 57lb 2oz. Had it been caught in January, and full of roe, its weight would be beyond that of the current record of 67lb 5oz established off the Shetland Islands in 2013.



Maurice Kemp's
astounding record
mackerel



Graham Eden's rough ground conger

CONGER

It was in June 1995 that Vic Evans who operated Sea Spray from Brixham Harbour caught an eel that took the record by storm. Most of his bookings were through a kiosk on the quay run by his wife Diane. It was a no-frills operation and the boat rarely went more than 15 miles from his berth. Always a keen conger man he had the ambition to catch a record conger and whenever the opportunity to fish on his own account presented itself, he was up for it. With very good weather, a small tide, and just two anglers aboard, he visited a wreck less than an hour's run from Berry Head. The trip was in its final hour when he picked up his rod and waited for the hook laden with mackerel to be taken. The eel that achieved his record ambition took the bait quietly and was given time to feed well on it, then a firm strike and feverish pumping brought the fish that vital distance from the wreckage for safety. At this stage no quarter was given and the fight took its usual line gain and line loss until, in a matter of 20 minutes, a great serpent-like shape came into view. Vic and one of the anglers gained firm gaff holds and hauled the protesting giant over the gunwale. Later Brixham's commercial market scales weighed it as the world of angling knows at 133lb 4oz, a massive improvement on the then jointly held record that had stood since 1992. Vic passed away some years ago but his great record lives on and may well do so for years to come.

DOING IT YOURSELF

Private boat anglers have had their share of great success, none more so than Roger Simcox of Kingsbridge who has been awarded five UK records. In 1976 he set a gilthead bream record in the shore category of 4lb 2oz. In 1980 he clinched the turbot of 33lb 12oz that still stands. 1989 was the year he took the boat record for the gilthead bream at 9lb 8oz and in 2015 lifted it to 10lb 2oz 4dr. Simcox's hunting grounds were the adjoining Kingsbridge and Salcombe estuaries and banks a mile or two offshore.

Eighteen miles further West at Wembury lives Graham Eden who has the distinction of catching the biggest Conger ever at rough ground. Taken at the West Rutts Reef it ►



Kevin Smith's record 21lb 10oz ling from 1994

Mark Wills' electric ray



RECORD DATA

This is a breakdown of the records established during the years stated: skippers, species and weight, year of capture and the ports from which they operated. The list does not take into account the very considerable number of fish that were record near-misses. No other ports outside of the South-West where there was charter boat angling came remotely close to the successes of those west of Dorset to the western approaches of the English Channel and those of Atlantic Cornwall.

weighed 92lb 6oz. Should rough ground category records be introduced in the future the conger would be his. In 2020, fishing the Eddystone Reef, he set a new record for scad with a fish of 3lb 8oz so adding to a very impressive catch log built up over 40 years. In 2006, fishing from his own boat Predator, Steve Underwood set the still current blonde ray record at 39lb off the Skerries Banks.

Today's Westcountry wreck charter scene is a shadow of what it was back in its heyday. The conger is no longer a popular species and the coalfish has disappeared. The high cost of offshore fishing now averages £75 per day, in some cases more, this having a massive impact on the number of anglers willing to spend such a sum. Plymouth is a prime example of the decline. In 1980 20 fully licensed boats operated from the port with roughly 50 per cent on a daily basis, the others on one mid-week day and weekends. Today there are four and none daily. ■

- **SEA SPRAY:** Vic Evans, Brixham, conger 133lb 4oz, 1995.
- **OSPREY:** George Pearce, red bream 9lb 8oz 12dr, off Dodman, 1974.
- **FLYING STAR:** Bob Armstrong, Plymouth, turbot 31lb 4oz, 1972.
- **SEA ANGLER:** Malcolm Jones, Plymouth, whiting 7lb 8oz.
- **Boat & Skipper unknown:** electric ray 96lb 1oz, off Dodman, 1975.
- **Other boats that constantly returned with big fish**
- **SMUGGLER 111:** Colin Dukes, Exmouth, credited with 100lb plus conger.
- **TIBURON:** Graham Hannaford, Plymouth, credited with 100lb plus conger.
- **GEMINI:** Dave Harrison, Dartmouth, credited with 100lb plus conger.
- **SIZE MATTERS:** Graham Hannaford, Plymouth, credited with 100lb plus conger.
- **BOAT UNKNOWN:** Roy Slater, Plymouth (Eddystone), bass 18lb 6oz 1975.

SHARKING

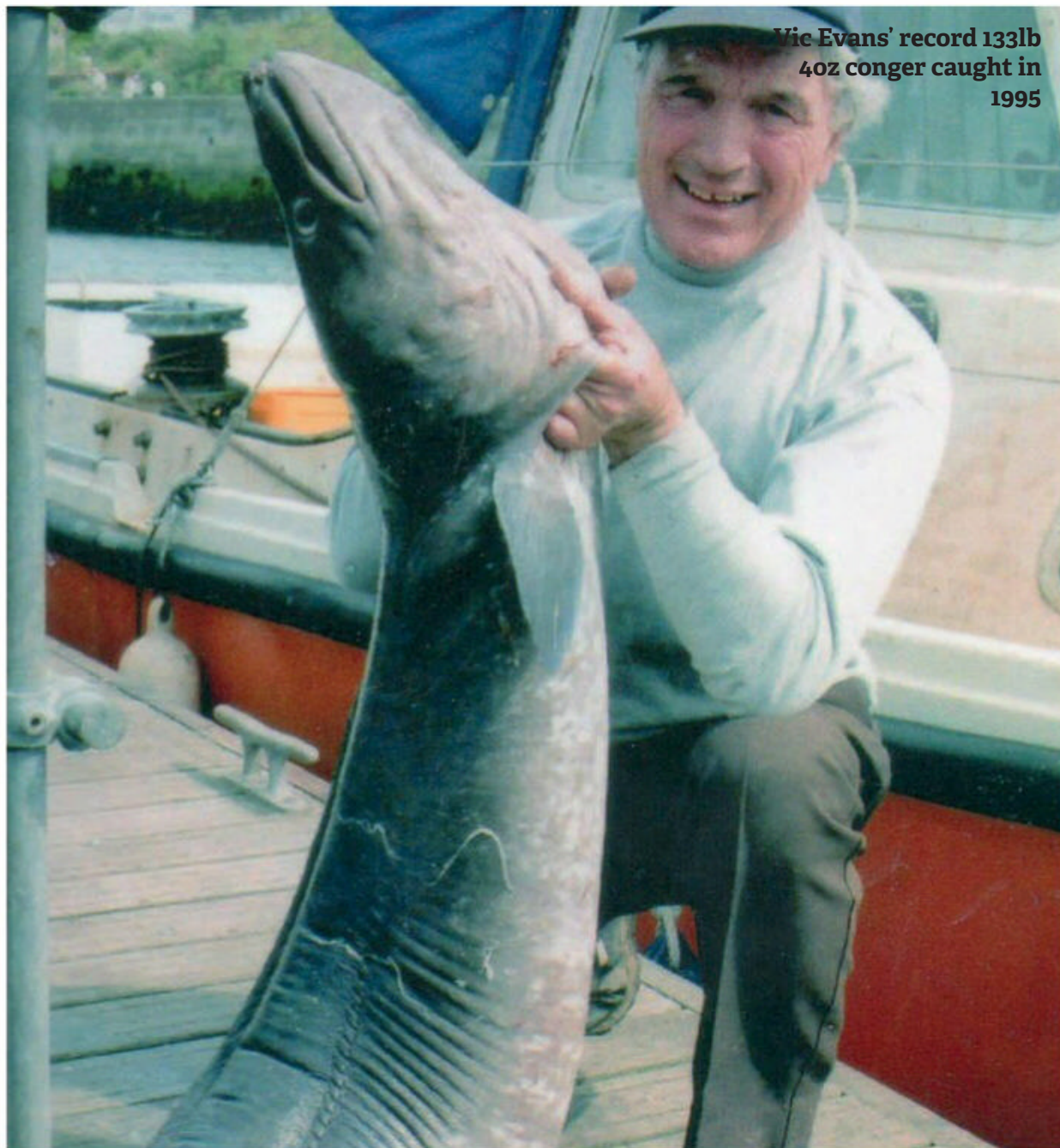
- **THE LITTLE ONE:** Bill Butters, Looe, mako 352lb, 1955; porbeagle, 271lb, 1957.
- **SWORDFISH:** Clinton Powell, Falmouth, mako, 476lb, 1964.
- **IRENE:** Raymond Pengelly, mako, 498 ½ lb, 1966.
- **LADY BETTY:** Alan Dingle, mako 500lb*, 1971; blue shark, 218lb, 1959
- **LADY JAYNE:** Ray Provis, Crackington Haven, porbeagle, 465lb, 1976.

* Nine other mako taken from Looe and Falmouth boats weighed between 400lb and 476lb. The top mako skipper was Falmouth's Robin Vinnicombe, who accounted for 16.

SHORE CATEGORY RECORDS THAT HAVE DEFEATED TIME.

- **Conger:** 68lb 8oz, Devil's Point, Plymouth, 1991.
- **Electric ray:** 52lb 12oz, Porthoustock, 1980
- **Flounder:** 5lb 7oz, Teign Estuary, 1994.
- **Gilthead bream:** 12lb 2oz, Salcombe, 2017.
- **Ling:** 21lb 10oz, Yealm Estuary, 1994
- **Mackerel:** 5lb 11oz 4dr, 1982.

Vic Evans' record 133lb 4oz conger caught in 1995



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PLYMOUTH SOUND TO DUKE ROCK

Mike Millman shares a lifetime's knowledge of how and where to fish the waters of his home town of Plymouth

MEWSTONE ROCK

A wealth of great fishing marks are within three miles of Plymouth's Barbican. In fact, 150 years ago, an early writer described the area as having 'famous' fishing. At its furthest point is the Mewstone Rock, a conical rock island off which conger and bull huss are the target species. Anchor anywhere around its south facing side, or at the eastern side, where a sizeable ledge of rock is hiding beneath fairly deep water. The Mewstone guards the entrance to the Yealm Estuary where the back of a sandbar is visited by small eyed ray. Live sandeel and launce do best but worm can be effective. The mark farthest away, but only a half-hour run from the Breakwater, is called The Ledges and has half a wreck on it. It has always been fine fishing for pollack and is located by lining up, as you go south, the lighthouse on the Breakwater, a massive residence on Plymouth Hoe and the right-hand side of Wembury church against the Mewstone Rock.



Plymouth
Breakwater



SHAGSTONE

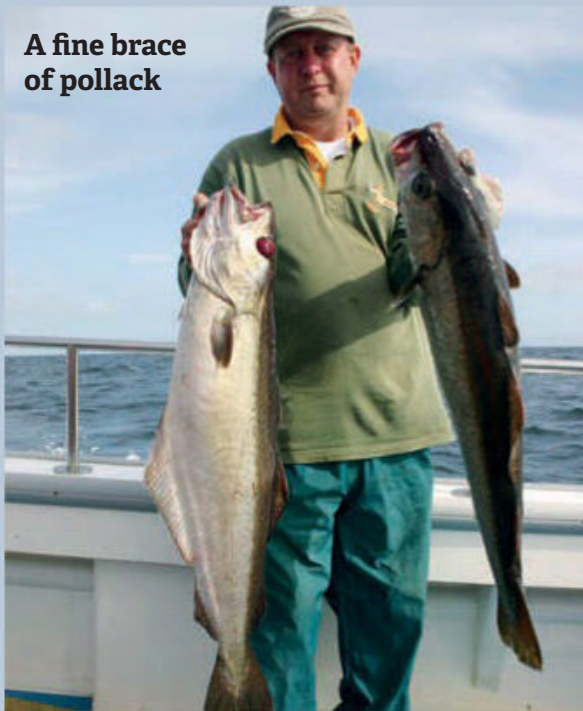
Fishing close into the shoreline of the estuary produces sizeable wrasse with the heaviest on record an eight pounder. Moving back towards the mile-long Breakwater we come to the Shagstone, a lone rock pinnacle always above water but on which many a vessel has come to grief. It's a good mark for conger and produced a sixty pounder, the second winner of the British Conger Club's 'Anglers Magazine Trophy'. What I consider my best pollack, a fish of 12lb 10 ½ oz, one of many thousands of pollack I've caught over the years, was taken at this mark early in the year with light line – a prime example of what can be achieved within a few hundred yards of the shore.

TINKER'S SHOAL

A half mile due south-west is the Tinker's Shoal. This is a series of rock pinnacles which are 15ft below the surface at the bottom of a neap tide. It's a good mark for pollack and best drift-fished on a spring tide with live bait. You can do quite well with king ragworm on a long trace. For the eels you need to anchor down in a neap from when the light starts to go.

The area within a few hundred yards of the west end of the Breakwater on its south facing side has produced blonde ray in the 30lb class and it was here, aeons ago, that the current Wyvern thornback ray record was taken. The fish weighed 29lb 8oz but I have always had the feeling it was, in fact, misidentified and was in reality a blonde ray.

**A fine brace
of pollack**



THE QUINNOWS

The next mark of note is half a mile off Rame Head called The Quinnows which attracts pollack and bass and some very big congeners have been taken here in the night hours.

DUKE ROCK

Off the inside edge of the breakwater at its eastern end is a massive mooring buoy fastened to the Duke Rock, a conger mark of some note. My own best rough ground fish weighing 50lb was taken during an evening session. A week later the same spot provided me with another of 48lb.

BARN POOL

Three hundred yards off the Mount Edgcombe shore is Barn Pool, the deepest part of the Plymouth Sound, in approximately 20 fathoms at low water. It gives conger, bull huss, big pouting and a float-fished bait, run through on a big tide, can encounter a bass. Directly opposite on the Devon side of the estuary against Blagdon's Boatyard is a free public slipway alongside a small car park which is free to use and where late in the day you can leave a car and trailer. The best bass area is abeam Mashford's boat yard at Cremyl where the tide run is really fierce and you will drift through it like a bat out of hell – if you have live eel or prawn you are on a winner!

Wilcove is a mooring area off the east flank of the River Tamar above Torpoint's ferry. It offers very sheltered fishing in strong westerlies for conger during neap tides.

After World War Two it was used by the Royal Navy for moth-balled ships. The huge shadows they created encouraged conger to take baits in daylight. All the vessels have long gone to the breaker's yards, among them two aircraft carriers, but the bay continues to offer good fishing at night.

The Port of Plymouth Authority issues a useful booklet with maps on where you can and cannot anchor. There are considerable areas of restriction so it is strongly advised to familiarise yourself with these in advance of going to sea.

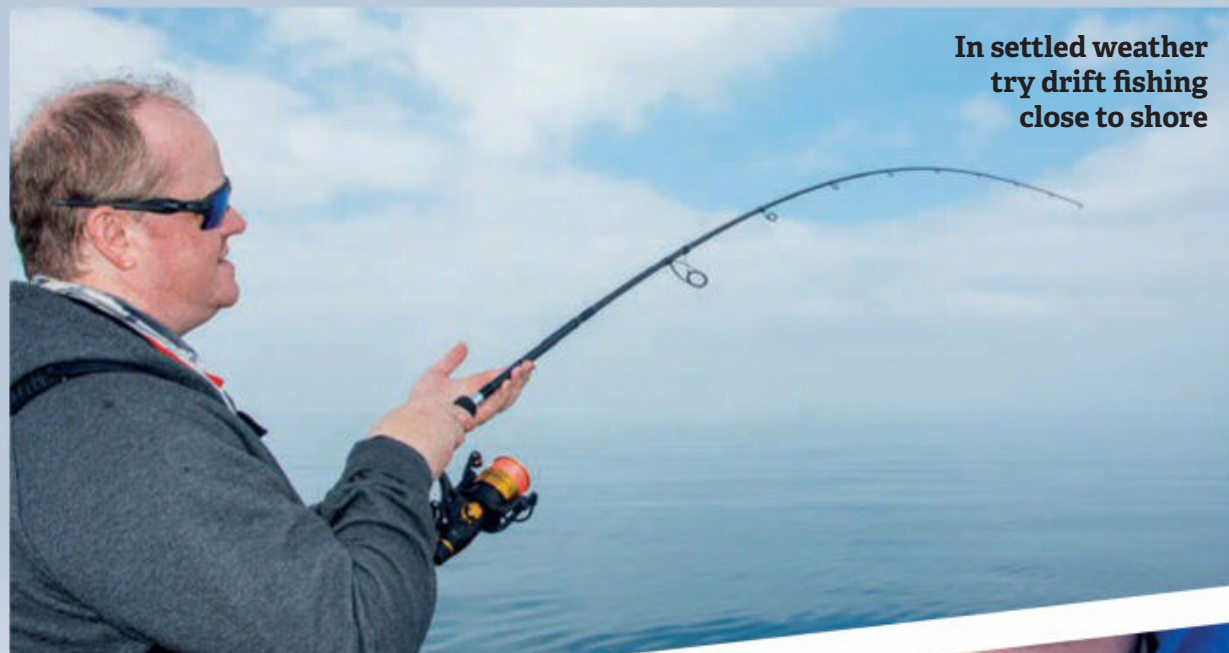
**Plymouth Barbican
and Plymouth Hoe**





HOLYHEAD

It's a busy ferry port but also a haven for small boat anglers who don't have to travel far to find good sport and a variety of species on offer



In settled weather try drift fishing close to shore

caught. The autumn fishing is best between late August through to mid-October with huss, conger, whiting, codling, wrasse, pollack, rays, and herring taken. The same species are there throughout the winter, but this is a very exposed area and small boat owners need to be very wary of local sea conditions during the out of season period.

MARKS

Popular ground throughout the year, but especially in the spring and summer, are marks tight into the shore just west of the breakwater and right out towards North Stack. Small boats can drift fish **here** and get sensibly close in **working** ground that is relatively **little** fished, but beware of lobster **pot** ropes. There is mixed rough **ground** interspaced with patches of **sand** throughout Holyhead Bay which is best fished at

Holyhead, on the west coast of Anglesey, North Wales, is a major ferry port for both Stena Line and Irish Ferries servicing the Holyhead to Dublin route across the Irish Sea. It's also famous for its 1.75-mile-long breakwater, the longest in the UK, which was originally built to offer a safe anchorage for vessels heading in and out of Liverpool, and other northern ports, in stormy weather.

SPECIES

From April onwards, the general rougher ground offers good wrasse fishing, also conger, huss and the occasional codling, along with pollack, some of the latter going over 8lb even tight inshore. Smoothound arrive from May onwards inside Holyhead Bay, with June to early August seeing the peak of the fishing for both numbers and the bigger fish over 20lb. General ground fishing will see pollack, codling, wrasse, thornback ray, tope, huss, gurnards, mackerel and dabs

April sees huss over rougher ground



Fishing close to shore produces good results





anchor but also produces when drift fishing.

From a small boat perspective, the smaller neap to middle sized tides fish best here with the rough ground producing the bulk of the species. An east to northeast wind can be particularly unpredictable along this coast, so bear this in mind. In settled weather and calm seas, there is rough ground towards Carmel Head and The Skerries to the north end of the bay which produces good pollack and very big wrasse, with sand patches producing rays, flatfish and gurnards.

This is a busy port with constant incoming and outgoing ferries, also other commercial shipping, so make sure you're aware of the recognised shipping lanes, also for swells created by large shipping.

TACTICS

Drift fishing between the breakwater and North Stack with soft plastic lures, including smaller weighted shads and sandeel imitations, can fish especially well with the darker colours generally best. Baited feathers will catch most general species over the rough ground between the breakwater and North Stack, though for the smaller species a 2-hook rig armed with size 4 to 2 Aberdeen hooks baited with either

mackerel strip, lug worm or rag will catch a lot of fish and produce a high species count, especially with a single yellow 5mm bead positioned just above the hook. The same 2-hook rig does well over the mixed ground inside the bay when fishing to anchor too. For the smoothhound, fish a sliding ledger and flowing trace of 30lb fluorocarbon with a size 4/0 hook. Bait with peeler crab or hard back crabs just nicked once by the hook through the rear edge of the body. The rays and huss can also be fished using the long trace rig, but use mackerel, squid or a combination of the two for these. Any conger and tope can also be targeted with fish baits, with fresh mackerel or a small dab the top tope bait.

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

General access is simple from pretty much all inland directions as the main A55 North Wales Expressway runs right along the North Wales coast and straight into Holyhead.

When you get to the traffic lights adjacent to the ferry terminals right-hand turn, continue straight on through the lights and follow the road on until it forces you to turn left on to the Prince of Wales Road which is signposted for the Marina. Follow this road, with the sea on your right-hand side, and it eventually brings you to the marina, again accessed by an obvious right-hand turn.



USEFUL INFORMATION

- Holyhead Coastguard: 01407 762051
- Maritime Office: 01248 752449/712312
- VHF Channels: 14/16

- Holyhead Marina Ltd: 01407 764242
- Website: www.holyheadmarina.co.uk
- E-mail: info@holyheadmarina.co.uk

TACKLE SHOPS

- Winnie's Worm & Tackle, 21 William St, Holyhead, LL65 1RN. Tel: 01407 760303
- Anglesea Tackle & Bait, 25 Dinam Road, Holyhead, LL65 5ND. Tel: 07931 194663

LAUNCHING

A concrete slipway with some parking is available at Holyhead Marina. Launch access is two hours either side of high water. Charges are quoted as £5 to launch and £5 to retrieve and are payable at the office which is opposite the marina cafe. Weekdays are usually not too busy, but when launching at weekends a phone call to the office a couple of days beforehand is advisable to check availability. ■



READER STORY

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A GO, YOU'LL NEVER KNOW

Hampshire fishing partners Steve Ansell and Kevin Charmen took a punt on a rumour and ended up boating five tope estimated between 30lb and 50lb in three hours, and all within half a mile of the shore off Chichester Harbour

We headed out to our normal rough ground spot about a mile out, for a go at the smoothhounds and rays. But it became a little choppy, so we headed back to the mouth of the harbour to get away from the white water.

We'd heard rumours of the odd tope coming out, so we already had some proper tackle on board, just in case. As we were whiling away some time fishing for bass, I decided to put one of the tope rigs on, just in case. I remember saying to Kev, "If we don't have a go, we will never know!".

FISH ON

After about 20 minutes, the reel was screaming with a fish taking 80 yards of line before eventually throwing the hook. This was all the encouragement we needed. Soon we had four tope rigs out, baited with mackerel chunks on size 8/0 Big Dog hooks, with 15in 100lb wire traces and 8ft leaders made with 140lb mono.

Before long Kev was into his first tope, an estimated 30-pounder, which he followed with three more to an estimated 40lb. Content with watching Kev bag up, and getting beaten up in the process, I almost forgot I was fishing too when one of my reels started to scream. This was a heavy fish and it spent most of its time on the surface, which is an awesome sight.

After a very spirited battle, we boated the fish, estimated at 50lb. We'd had one of the best sessions of our lives. We even man-hugged and jump about as if we'd scored the winning goal in the World Cup.

It's days like these that keeps angling in your blood forever. I'm off to buy a new net now, as mine is truly knackered! ■



BOAT STORE

The latest gear and technology for boat-owning anglers

RAYMARINE - LIGHTHOUSE 4

The powerful combination of Raymarine Axiom chartplotter displays and the LightHouse operating system gives boat angler elite-level awareness.

Raymarine have announced the next generation of the LightHouse Operating System. The new LightHouse 4 delivers even easier to use operation, exciting personalization options, and several new features. As with all Raymarine software upgrades, LightHouse 4 is available to all Axiom, Axiom+, Axiom Pro, and Axiom XL owners completely free as a downloadable update.

A revised menu structures enable easier use of the depth of Axiom features, with personalized images now an option for all boaters to make their boat even more their own. Feature improvements include deeper integration with Mercury Engines, Sirius XM Fish Mapping and Navionics charts to heighten a captain's boat awareness at the helm. New dynamic tiles on the homescreen allow the presentation of navigation, NMEA2000 or SeaTalkng data immediately available on start up.

EASIER TO USE

The new LightHouse 4 OS provides a refined visual experience. Simplified menus make tapping into the power of Axiom faster and easier than ever. Longer pull-up menus are now nested and more intuitive to read and operate. LightHouse Apps that integrate control or provide information from marine integration partners like Seakeeper, Victron, Lumishore, and a host of others are now launchable directly from the LightHouse Home Screen, and key LightHouse Apps are now viewable in split-screen configurations. Additionally, the critical MOB touch key has been relocated to share prominent space on the Home Screen.

MORE PERSONALISATION

LightHouse 4 offers more options than ever to personalize how Axiom looks and functions. Boat anglers can now add a favourite photo to the Home Screen background or create dynamic dashboard tiles to keep them informed of real-time instruments and navigation data right from the home screen display.



LightHouse 4 takes integration with Mercury Marine Vessel View to the next level, offering Active Exhaust Volume control, a new and refined Engine Data Summary page, and more.

EXCITING UPGRADES

LightHouse 4 delivers a host of additional key upgrades, including active route line visual enhancements, new levels of audio control, and more. Of particular interest to Navionics chart users, LightHouse 4 beautifully supports the display of high-resolution bathymetric data and satellite imagery that comes bundled with new Navionics Platinum plus charts.

■ For complete information on the new LightHouse 4 OS, or for free download, visit raymarine.com/multifunction-displays/lighthouse4





AIR MAIL

AFRICAN POMPANO

If you find yourself fishing a tropical shallow water reef, buckle-up for a battle with this stunning-looking and hard-fighting member of the jack family

The African pompano, *Alectis ciliaris*, also known as the pennant-fish or threadfin trevally, is a widely distributed species of the jack family, Carangidae. The species is found in tropical waters

worldwide. Juveniles have long, filamentous dorsal and anal fin tips which are thought to discourage predators. The species lives in depths less than 100m, consuming a range of crustaceans and small fishes. The current IGFA all tackle record for African pompano is held by a fish that weighed 50lb 8oz, caught off Daytona Beach, Florida, in 1990.

The species has been recorded from both the east and west coasts of the US, South America and Africa, throughout the Indian Ocean and along Asia and Australia, as well as many islands in the Pacific. I have personally seen and caught this impressive looking species at various locations throughout the Indian Ocean and Caribbean. However, by far the most specimens I have encountered have been when fishing off the Pacific coast of Central America, notably in Panama and Costa Rica.






TACTICS

As far as I am aware it is not possible to specifically target African Pompano, they are one of those species that from time to time turn up when fishing for other species. One thing that I have noted over the years is that most African pompano I have seen have been caught when fishing relatively close to shore, or over shallow reefs if fishing further offshore. In Panama and Costa Rica we mostly fish for roosterfish using several methods including a variety of baits and lures, all of which from time to time produce a bonus pompano. Live baits, such

as the local species of pilchard and sardine, are very effective for many species, and will certainly tempt any pompano in the vicinity. We catch these superb baits using Sabiki lures first thing in the morning, store them in an aerated livebait well and then present them rigged on circle hooks, either from a drifting boat, or more typically by trolling them at dead slow speed just outside of the back breakers on a surf beach, or across a reef.

We fish a lot of different types of lures throughout the tropics, and again, many if not most of these are effective for pompano. Small pencil poppers or stick baits are especially good. Personally, I like to use a 5-6in popper that you can cast a long way and cover a lot of water. The lure needs to stick to the surface so that it can be retrieved making that all important 'pop, pop, pop'. On one or two occasions I have also witnessed pompano that have been caught on jigs, and others that have taken cut bait. Essentially, wherever you fish in the tropics there will always be a chance of encountering one of these beautiful looking fish. ■





THE LURE OF BOAT FISHING

Self-confessed 'bass nut', Dave Lewis, on lure fishing shallow inshore waters from a boat

I've been fishing for bass using lures for well over forty years and I've been a keen lure angler as long as I can remember. When I started spinning in the 1970s most of my fishing was based around using the tried and tested 'metals' such as the ABU Toby and other similar spoons, various Mepps-type lures, and the crude though effective German Sprats, not forgetting the various rubber sandeel imitations that have come and gone over the years.

Moving into the 1980s and 1990s, like so many other 'bass nuts', I read Mike Ladle's and friends' classic book 'Operation Sea Angler'. As a result, I swiftly switched to using jointed plugs such as the iconic Rapala J11 and J13, along with other similar patterns from, mostly, American companies such as Rebel and Storm, which at the time were all that were available. I would fish these lures in conjunction with a standard 9-10ft medium action spinning rod matched with a fixed spool reel, the classic Mitchell 300, loaded with 8-12lb monofilament.

I wouldn't go so far to claim I am, or ever have been in any way, an expert lure angler, but I have caught my fair share of bass and other species over the years using lures. I suppose I could accurately claim to be a competent and experienced lure angler. But I have to admit that I was slow to embrace change and join the ever-swelling ranks of 'modern bass anglers' who lure fish almost exclusively for bass; anglers who share a penchant for casting hugely expensive lures, of mostly Japanese origin.

For many years I never fully appreciated the need to upgrade my trusty spinning rods to the latest super-fast action rods or use hi-tech non-stretch braid instead of monofilament. Or, for that matter, spend, and not in any way baulk at the prospect of forking out, upwards of £20, or even £30, to buy a plastic lure in order to catch a bass! Which, on reflection, is surprising, as for many years this is exactly what I have done for my lure fishing overseas.

SET-UP

Today my UK boat bass lure outfit consists of an 8ft 6in fast action rod. When fishing afloat I prefer the lifting power of shorter rods. The old Mitchell is long retired and now sits on a shelf in my tackle room and I use a 4000-size fixed spool reel that has been built for saltwater use. The reel features a smooth gearing and a reliable clutch and is loaded with 20-30lb braid, terminating in a 3ft leader cut from either clear monofilament or, increasingly these days, fluorocarbon. At the end of the leader I attach the lures using either small, simple, high quality clips or, when specifically setting out to fish 'walk-the-dog' style, I attach the lure directly to the end of the leader using a small loop tied using a Rapala knot. This gives the lure chance to work with its best possible action but does mean retying when changing lures and thus shortening the leader each time.

Lure fishing afloat is both a pleasurable and productive way to fish. Fishing close inshore allows you to cast into many areas that are totally unreachable from the shore, plus you can cover a lot of ground while trying to locate fish. When casting lures afloat for bass, you will often be drifting over shallow ground where you will be able to clearly see the seabed beneath as the boat drifts in the shadow of the high coastal cliffs. On many occasions you will be close enough to be able to cast a lure onto the adjacent shoreline with ease while working water right up to the kelp-covered rocks that lie exposed along the inter-tidal zone, prime territory for bass.

TACTICS

If targeting bass, your intention should be to thoroughly work the shallow, weedier areas along with the edges of the reefs, and anywhere where these give way to any patches of sand. Make sure you thoroughly work any isolated outcrops of rock or small islands, and any other interesting features along the coast where a hungry predator might hide. Usually, dawn and dusk are the prime fishing times for bass but you can catch fish right through the day, especially when the sky is overcast. I love to fish on those days when there is barely a breath of wind and the sea is calm, allowing me to work the boat into the shallowest of water. Fishing as a flooding tide starts its push has been especially productive for me.

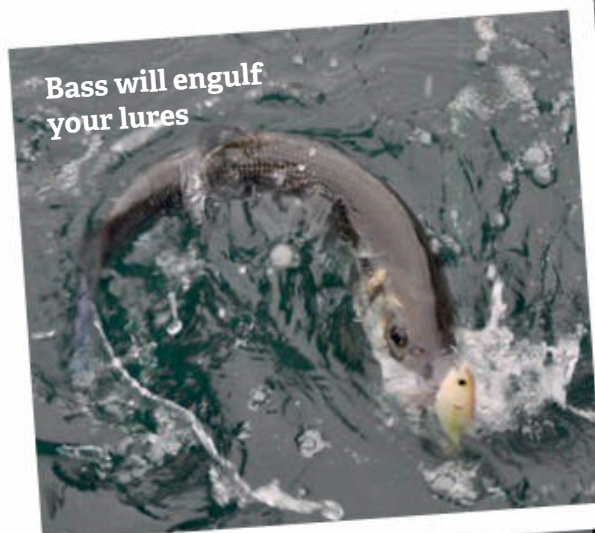
WALK THE DOG

These conditions are perfect for fishing top water lures, lures such as the Lucky Craft Sammy, which are fished using a technique known as 'walking-the-dog.' The Sammy is a funky looking lure which, when worked correctly, swims in a most enticing way across

the surface. The walk the dog technique takes a bit of practice to perfect, but it's worth the effort. Basically, it involves steadily retrieving the lure through the surface film, while simultaneously twitching the rod tip, which results in the lure zig zagging in a most lifelike way that a predator, such as a bass, will rarely be able to resist.

The biggest hurdle most anglers have when fishing a new lure is confidence, but there is nothing better to boost a lure angler's confidence than catching a fish on that lure. Fishing a surface lure is a highly visual and exciting technique, especially when a fish strikes at the lure. Sometimes you will see an interested fish, or even a group of fish, suddenly appear and track the lure from behind, a sight guaranteed to set the heart racing!

Bass often hit a surface lure and miss, at which point you should briefly stop the retrieve and pause for a moment before continuing the retrieve. Now you are attempting to imitate a bait fish that has been stunned and is struggling away from danger, which almost always will result in another, more aggressive, strike and a solid hook up. On other occasions a fish will literally hit the lure out of the water, and on the next cast one might wholly engulf a lure in a boil of white water at the first attempt, resulting in the line pulling taught and a fully bent rod bent with the reel clutch screaming: fish on! ■



Bass will engulf your lures



Top water lure fishing produces another bass

The biggest hurdle most anglers have when fishing a new lure is confidence, but there is nothing better to boost a lure angler's confidence than catching a fish on that lure.



Fishing from a boat allows you to access shallow water marks inaccessible from the shore

SEA SCHOOL

Our experts solve your fishing problems

Q & A

SHORE ANGLING

WINNING QUESTION

ASK THE EXPERTS

When sending your question, please remember to include your name and address



JAMES MADSEN

Bristol Channel angler James Madsen is here to solve all your shore angling problems.



DAVE LEWIS

Based in Newport, South Wales, our contributing editor Dave answers boat fishing questions.



JOHN HOLDEN

A Sea Angler contributor for over four decades specialising in casting and rod building.



HENRY GILBEY

Angler, blogger and photo-journalist Henry, based in Cornwall, is our lure expert.



BEN BASSETT

The Plymouth angler and blogger will provide answers on the sport of light rock fishing (LRF), the go-anywhere tactic.

HOW TO ASK A US QUESTION

■ Email: sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk
or online: www.facebook.com/seaanglermag

By asking a question you are giving us permission to use your name and where you live in all versions and platforms of this magazine.

Q For the first in two years of using braid I experienced small electric shocks when casting a 6oz lead with bait 100 yards. The month was March, the weather was overcast with occasional showers, no thunder, no lightning. Do you know if anyone else has experienced this? PAUL DICKENS, BRISTOL CHANNEL

JM says: Apparently, you can get an electrostatic shock if you are electrically 'charged' and you touch something that is earthed, or if you're earthed and you touch something that is charged. It can happen when you pick up too many ultra-tiny things called electrons, sometimes from certain fabrics (braid), which are negatively charged. When they come into contact with a positively charged surface

— often metal (or a carbon fishing rod) — the negatively charged neutrons want to jump on to it. When this happens, we can feel that 'electric shock' sensation when a positive and a negative charge meet. I'm sure it's nothing to worry about Paul, unless your hair starts standing on end! Seriously though, just think about all that power in your fingertips and you might put a few extra yards on your cast!

Q I do some pretty long hikes on certain beaches in order to find some more quiet fishing spots. I'm looking for a decent but more lightweight beach shelter, what would you recommend?

RICHARD WILLIAMSON, YORKSHIRE

JM says: I would look no further and buy yourself a Shakespeare Salt XT beach shelter. I've recently got my hands on one and must say I'm very impressed. This shelter is super lightweight and easy to assemble. It's a great size too and can easily fit two anglers underneath along with seat boxes. The shelter comes with its own carrying case and a set of some pretty sturdy looking pegs which will



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WINNING QUESTION

Q I would like to be more conservation minded and I'm interested in using more circle hooks when fishing in the United Kingdom. I've started to look into different setups with circle hooks and keep hearing about the 'dongle'. Please can you explain what a dongle is and how it works?

JOE ADAMS, SUSSEX

JM says: Simply explained, a dongle is something you attach to a circle hook which holds your bait in place. A dongle will also allow you to clip a bait up to a rig when casting. I guess you could say there are two different ways to present a bait on a circle hook. If casting any great distance isn't really an issue, then you could simply attach bait to a circle hook, without elastic, on a flapping-type rig and cast it out. However, if you want to use a circle hook on some sort of clipped down rig, preferably to cast greater distances, or because you wanted to use a softer bait that wouldn't stay on the hook without elastic, then this is when the dongle comes into play. The idea of a dongle rig originated from South Africa but they actually named it a 'Dingle Dangle'. Once copied by anglers around the United Kingdom, it would seem the dingle dangle rig became the dongle rig. There is a bit of history about the device; let me explain how it works. First of all, you need to understand how a circle hook works. Obviously, like you have already hinted, many anglers are now choosing circle hooks over J-hooks because they want to practice better fish conservation, with regards to catch and release. More often than not, when using a circle, the hook ends up in the mouth of a fish rather than the gut. This is because the point of a circle hook is 90 degrees to the shank, and once swallowed by a fish, the point



of the hook shouldn't penetrate until it's on its way back out, often catching in the corner of the mouth. Don't get me wrong, everyone has their own ideas when fishing, but for me a circle should be used as a single hook without a Pennell and the bait needs to be able to move freely around the gape and up the shank. I attach my circle hooks onto a snood with a perfection loop because this allows the circle hook to move freely and helps the point of the hook to more easily find the corner of the mouth. Whether baiting up with or without a dongle, I always like my bait sitting at the bottom end of the hook's gape, in the area nearest to the point. You also need your bait to move freely because once the point on the circle hook penetrates, this will allow the entire hook to enter the fish's mouth. A dongle could be made from a piece of wire, nylon or braid. The dongle should also be allowed to move freely on the circle hook once attached, but obviously not being able to slip completely off the hook. You can vary the length of your dongle, depending on the size of your bait. I like to use a baiting tool to help when whipping my bait onto the dongle with elastic. You will need to have, and leave exposed, either a loop or some sort of clip at the bottom of the dongle because that is how you attach it to your rig before casting. It really is a clever little device which allows you to hold your bait in the correct position on a circle hook, and once clipped down to the rig, it also makes your bait very aerodynamic for casting.

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Rapala

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T&Cs: * One prize per winning question will be chosen by the editor. Prizes cannot be exchanged and no correspondence will be looked into. We reserve the right to send alternative prizes.

Q I'm aiming to get out cod fishing over the next month or so. What is your favourite bait for spring cod fishing?

ALAN DAVIS, SOMERSET

JM says: If I had to choose one bait, when targeting cod in the spring, it would be peeler crab. As the weather and water temperature warms up the shore crabs begin to molt. This makes peeler crab one of the most natural baits, especially when you are fishing over a reef which is a natural hunting ground for the cod in the spring months.



Q&A

LURE FISHING

Q Do you think that conditions can ever be too rough for bass to feed in?

JULES MASON, BOURNEMOUTH

HG says: This is really interesting, and partly because I look at this a bit differently to your question. I have been amazed at how effortlessly bass can move around and feed in some really hectic conditions, and some of the tides and seas which I see the Brittany-based French commercial bass fishermen fish in their smaller boats are verging on mad in my opinion. They catch bass though!

I am assuming that there have to be conditions so bad that bass cannot or will not feed in them, but I wonder if this is down to other less obvious factors such as masses of broken up weed or sand and silt washing around and making life difficult their gills to work. My feeling is that bass are not coming inshore for a bit of a laugh, so, if the food isn't there then why would they be? Can their various food sources which they might find inshore in different areas cope with really rough conditions?

I choose to come at this more from the conditions that we can effectively and safely fish. If we bear in mind that lots of areas in the UK and Ireland can and do fish well for bass when it's calm (I generally like calm weather for night fishing), then it's most likely there are not actually as many areas which can respond well to rougher conditions as we might think. I live and do a lot of my bass fishing in Cornwall, and in many parts of Cornwall we can get some good bass fishing when conditions get rougher. But there's rough and then there's out of control and dangerous. It's up to us to make a judgement call and not put ourselves in danger.

Along the south coast of Cornwall I can go surf fishing in what I would call

pretty bouncy conditions, but it's never remotely dangerous when I am fishing off the beach. When the conditions get seriously hectic the water tends to badly colour up and fill up with weed so I can't fish it even if I wanted to. Out on the rocks I will often fish in rougher conditions if the location tends to work like this, but again, I need good water. I would urge any angler who is out on the rocks in any kind of bouncy conditions to please wear an auto-inflate lifejacket at the very least.

If I was to head up to north Cornwall then straight away the whole issue of swell becomes another factor to consider. I can generally fish rougher conditions from the beach without



the water colouring up, but again, if I can't effectively present lures to potential fish then what's the point of fishing it? I will never fish rough conditions at night when I can't see what is coming at me as well, and I will generally not push rougher conditions out on the rocks on the north coast because of the risks presented by swell. Lure fishing tends to force us to fish far closer to sea level than we might need to with heavier bait gear, and this is an important factor which is often overlooked.



WINNING QUESTION

Q What do you think about using something like Google Earth to look for bass marks?

RALPH MCCONNELL, KENT

HG says: I think back to my early days at Plymouth University when I first came to live in the South West and I remember those miles and miles of tramping around the coastline with not much but an OS Map for company, on the hunt for potential fishing spots. What I would have done for resources such as Google Earth back then! I would have saved myself plenty of fruitless hikes and scrambles up and down a few cliffs.

So yes, I think an online resource like Google Earth is amazing, but I still think that nothing beats actually getting out there for a proper look around. When I am looking for fishing spots, or trying to evaluate a new area, I will do a deep-dive on Google Earth to try and get a decent idea of the ground, and then I know what my access points might be, where I can park, what paths I need to walk, and

so on. I might have a look on Google for photos of various beaches and headlands, plus there are numerous websites dedicated to providing details of specific beaches and where to access them from.

But that online stuff only takes me so far. If a specific area or potential mark looks interesting I will usually grab the dog jump in my car, and head out there for a walk around. I would usually try and time this with low water to get a better idea of the ground, plus where I might get cut off if I was to fish the flood tide and access was unpredictable.

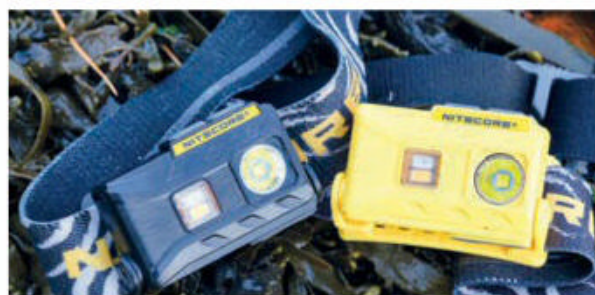


Q Do you use a red light on your headlamp for night lure fishing?

NEIL COLLINS, BIRKENHEAD

HG says: I have listened to a fair few fishing podcasts from across the pond where night fishing for striped bass has been around about as long as anglers have fished from the shore over there. The one thing I picked up was the generally accepted belief that a red light on a headlamp is not meant to spook fish anything like a white light does. There are, of course, situations like well-lit piers which fish perfectly well at night, but I happen to believe that as little light as possible on a quiet bit of shoreline in the middle of the night when chasing predators like bass can only be a good thing.

I will tend to walk to the location with a white light, but then switch over to the red beam when I need to change lures or move from rock to rock. I can't prove that this makes any difference at all, but I go back to those US striped bass anglers who have been night fishing for a lot longer than me. I use a tiny little Nitecore NU25 headlamp which has a powerful enough red light, but if I need any kind of brighter white light at night I will turn myself away from the water at the very least.



SEA SCHOOL

Our experts solve your fishing problems

Q&A

BOAT ANGLING



Q Does the colour of the lure you use make any difference when fishing in hundreds of feet of water, and if you think it does, what are the most effective colours?

HARRY CAMPBELL, BELFAST

DL says: Science tells us that no, it doesn't. But from what I have experienced on numerous occasions I would say yes, even in deep water the colour of a lure can make a difference. Whether or not this is because of the actual lure colour or because in your mind you believe you are using the most effective colour, so are fishing with a great confidence and efficiency, I really don't know. When fishing in deep water I like to use black, red, or orange lures, switching to more natural colours as the water gets shallower. Key to success is to always keep an eye on what colour lures other anglers are catching their fish on.

Q When mooring at a marina, how many fenders should I use to protect a 19ft boat?

MARTIN WILLIAMS, HAMPSHIRE

DL says: The simple answer is enough! You need to ensure that you use enough fenders that no part of the hull can come in contact with the mooring pontoons or other boats, regardless of the stage of tide and wind direction. In most situations four fenders should be sufficient to protect a 19ft boat.



WINNING QUESTION

Q In the area I fish, when feathering for mackerel, we occasionally catch weaver fish. I understand they are venomous. What is the best way to handle them and not get stung?

GEOFF PRICE, CHESHIRE

DL says: The simple answer is don't handle them! If the fish cannot be easily shaken free using a pair of long-handled pliers without causing contact with any part of your body, simply cut it free. The risk of an incredibly painful sting is simply too great.



Q If I break down at sea and need to call out a lifeboat, will I get charged?

STEVE SAUNDERS, HEREFORD

DL says: Most definitely not. The services of the RNLI are free of charge and you should never hesitate to call upon them if ever you feel you are in, or likely to get into, difficulty. Of course, being a registered charity, the RNLI will always be grateful to accept any donation offered by those whom they have helped.



Q With warmer weather and plaice fishing approaching, what is the best way to store freshly blown lugworm for a day's fishing?

DAVE MANSFIELD, WEST SUSSEX

DL says: Place the worms in plastic trays with just enough clean seawater to cover them. Store these in a cool box with plenty of frozen gel packs. Only remove as many worms at a time as you need, making sure you keep the lid of the box firmly closed and out of direct sunshine. Never store whole and broken worms in the same tray, and use any broken worms first.



Q Is it true that the smoothhound season is starting earlier each year?

OWEN RICHARDS, NORTH WALES

DL says: In South Wales we used to see the first hounds caught in late May or early June, but in recent years fish have been caught in April or even March. Further, whereas smoothhounds used to remain in our area only until August, these days good numbers of fish have been caught through September into October. Your local tackle shop should be able to tell when and where the first fish are usually encountered, and social media will tell you when they have arrived.

Q & A

LIGHT ROCK FISHING

Q What motivates you to keep Light Rock Fishing (LRF)?

EDGAR PERIERA, PORTUGAL

WINNING QUESTION

BB says: What an interesting question. For me, it's the endless possibilities of species, lures and techniques. Every year I plan to catch certain species in new and exciting ways. This year, for example, I'm focusing on catching a flounder on a crankbait and a greater weever fish on a metal jig. I also strive to learn more about my quarry, whether that's trying to figure out the movements of the grey triggerfish that visit our waters, or discovering new populations of rarities, like ringneck blennies or Stephen's goby. There are always plenty of exciting rods, reels, lines and lures to try out from across the world too.



Q Following on from your earlier answer I wonder if you could give me any advice on a good quality braid that would work well for fishing lures yet won't break the bank?

WILLIAM BOSWELL, DEVON

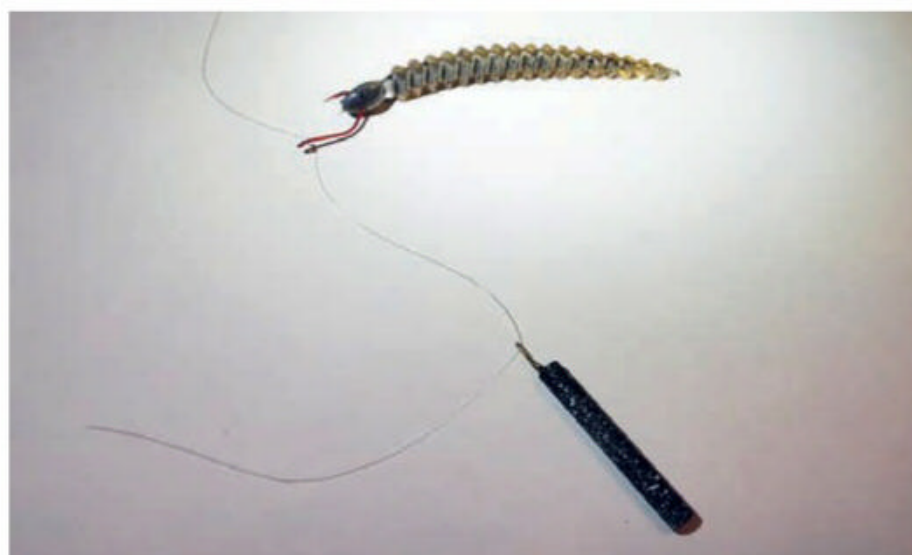


BB says: This is a very easy to answer question for me as I regularly use a braid that is very cheap in comparison to others – Majorcraft Dangan Braid in 6lb breaking strain. This ultralight PE braid is bright pink, casts with very little resistance and is a bargain at under £15. It does have some drawbacks of course; it's not very abrasion resistant and will lose its hot pink colour after a while. But I have used £50 per spool braids that have the exact same drawbacks and exactly the same strengths. It is well worth a try. I have two tips when using ultralight braid. Firstly, check your line before each session. If you see any fraying on your line, cut it back and re-tie your leader. This will reduce any unforeseen breakages on larger fish. Secondly, use your leader wisely. If you are dropping in between boulders, double the length of your leader to avoid rubbing your braid on the rocks. If you are worried about retying leaders regularly, use a leader that's well below the breaking strain of your mainline, so the leader snaps when snagged and not your braid.

Q What knot do you use for drop shotting?

RYAN GOUDIE, DEVON

BB says: I use the 'drop shot knot'. I thread the hook on with the point facing the end of the line. I then turn the line back on itself in a loop 20cm from the end of the line, this gives options for where the weight will clip onto. I then twist the line eight times in my fingers from both sides of the loop, creating a gap in the line. I thread the hook through the gap but not completely, so the eye is still in the knot but the rest of the hook is through. I then tighten from both sides, making sure to keep the hook at a 90-degree angle from the mainline. The eye will now sit on one side and the rest of the hook is on the other side, this ensures the hook stands at a 90-degree angle.



Q & A

KAYAK FISHING

Q I am new to kayak fishing and think that safety is paramount as I will be fishing alone most of the time. What are the top five items I need when venturing out to sea that could potentially save my life? JOHN DANSIE, ESSEX

MC says: Here are my top 5...

1 No matter what, you should always wear a good quality paddling personal floatation device (PFD). I am a fan of Palm equipment and have been using the Kaikoura for years. This is a quality PFD designed by a kayaking brand that has plenty of stowage and attachment points inbuilt for the other necessary safety equipment. Most importantly, there are large pockets which can take a handheld VHF radio so it is secure and protected from the elements. Whatever PFD you choose make sure it is worn and done up!

2 Secondly, you need decent clothing to protect you from the elements, both on the kayak and in the water, should you end up where the fish are. For most of the year this is ideally a full, breathable, drysuit (with suitable undergarments to regulate your temperature). In the middle of summer a wetsuit or paddle pants, bib, and brace may be sufficient but you do need to bear in mind that should you end up in the water, and separated from your kayak, you could be waiting a while before rescue services arrive on the scene to haul you out; so ensure that you dress for immersion.

3 Third in the list has to be the means of calling for help. There is no real alternative to a quality waterproof VHF radio, which requires an OFCOM licence and a RYA Short Range certificate to operate without supervision. This is a vital tool for all sea users and mine sits securely into the large right-hand pocket of my PFD, with the aerial tucked away in a clip just above. While it is there as my first response to an emergency rescue scenario it is useful for weather forecasts and in constant use for general on the water radio traffic, both for calling and receiving. Channel 16, the emergency and calling channel, is constantly monitored with Channel 8 on dual watch in my own waters as the locally preferred ship-to-ship working channel for small commercial, charter, and leisure boats. Channels 12 and 14 are my two local harbour calling channels and in other locations alternates are used. It is always best to check what is in use in the area you are paddling. Be mindful that operating a touch screen mobile phone with wet hands is unlikely to be effective, especially through a pouch.

4 A serrated rescue knife and/or a line cutter are massively important too. There's nothing worse

than being tangled up or snagged, either in the water or above it. Having them on either shoulder where you can access them easily, while being out of the way, is my preference. From cutting quickly through fishing lines and deck rigging, to freeing a snagged anchor; they are absolutely vital. I had a bouncing anchor in three knots and 80ft of water on one occasion where the kayak was swinging wildly and vibrating whenever the anchor caught. The stretch was pulling out of the warp and would accelerate every time it pulled. Not knowing if it was going to ultimately snag on a piece of wreckage, I had no choice but to cut it away, one handed, as I was gripping the sides of the kayak. The anchor reel was already shuttled to the rear so the only option was to cut through both cords from the anchor trolley, which parted with a hell of a twang. Had I not had suitable blades easily to hand I would have had even bigger issues. So that's number four.

5 Number five? Well, there are a few to choose from which you can tailor to your situation: warm headgear in winter; a suitable hat in summer; deck lights for night fishing; a strobe light mounted on your shoulder if you are out in darkness; a heliograph (a tip I got from an air-sea rescue pilot, on a good day this can be seen for miles); a personal locator beacon (PLB) is potentially a lifesaver, especially in remote areas; a mobile phone in a waterproof pouch can be used for a myriad of things, from communication to location and providing light; a spare paddle if you are not confident in the strength of your main one (or even if you are – I snapped the shaft on my surf paddle in Cornwall summer while catching a good wave).

This kit should keep you safe against the main hazards but never forget the importance of local knowledge, paddling, and self-rescue skills, all of which are the best lifesavers. ■





FISH PREPARATION

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Don't know where to begin skinning and filleting dogfish and huss? Let Sea Angler help with this step-by-step guide

In the last 10 years the lesser spotted dogfish has taken up the slack when our cod stocks crashed. The species has always been very common in some parts of the country, such as the Bristol Channel, but has become increasingly common and can now be found in all around the coast. Its larger cousin, the bull huss, also known as the nursehound or greater spotted dogfish, is still found mainly in the South West, Wales, the South Coast and Scotland.

Dogfish have never been a favoured eating fish by the public but many sea anglers know that they do taste good if prepared and cooked correctly. Lesser spotted dogfish can grow to about two kilos (4.4lb) with the average specimen nearer one kilo. With only a cartilaginous backbone a good quantity of meat can be taken. If, like many, you have looked at the fish in the sink and had nightmares about getting the skin off, worry no more! The master fishmonger at the Boathouse Fisheries will show us his hints and tips for smooth, stress-free, skinning of this tasty fish.

Known in fish and chip shops as huss or 'rock salmon' it is a great fish for those who don't like the fiddly and throat-catching bones found in most bony fish species. The average dogfish will give two good portions that have just the one large bone which can easily be removed or avoided.



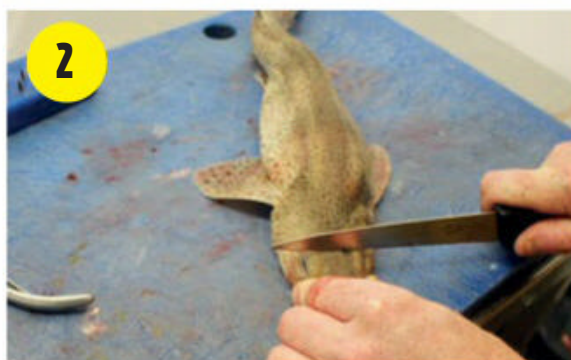
1 The tools needed for the removal of the skin are a very sharp knife, a board with either nails or screws inserted, and a good pair of pliers



3 Take the knife down the full length of the fish to remove the fillet



5 Make a triangular cut at the top of the fillet to release the skin



2 The first cut is the most important as this will enable you to remove both skin and guts in a single procedure



4 When making the cuts to remove the skin always work the knife away from your hands and body.



6 Use the pliers and the board to hold the fillet while removing the skin



Image: Rosalind Knight

7

The skin will then come away in one section



8



Remove the cartilage, the only bone, in one movement

9



You can see the triangular shape of the cartilage or backbone

10



The finished fillet ready for the pan

NEXT MONTH Skinning and preparing conger eel

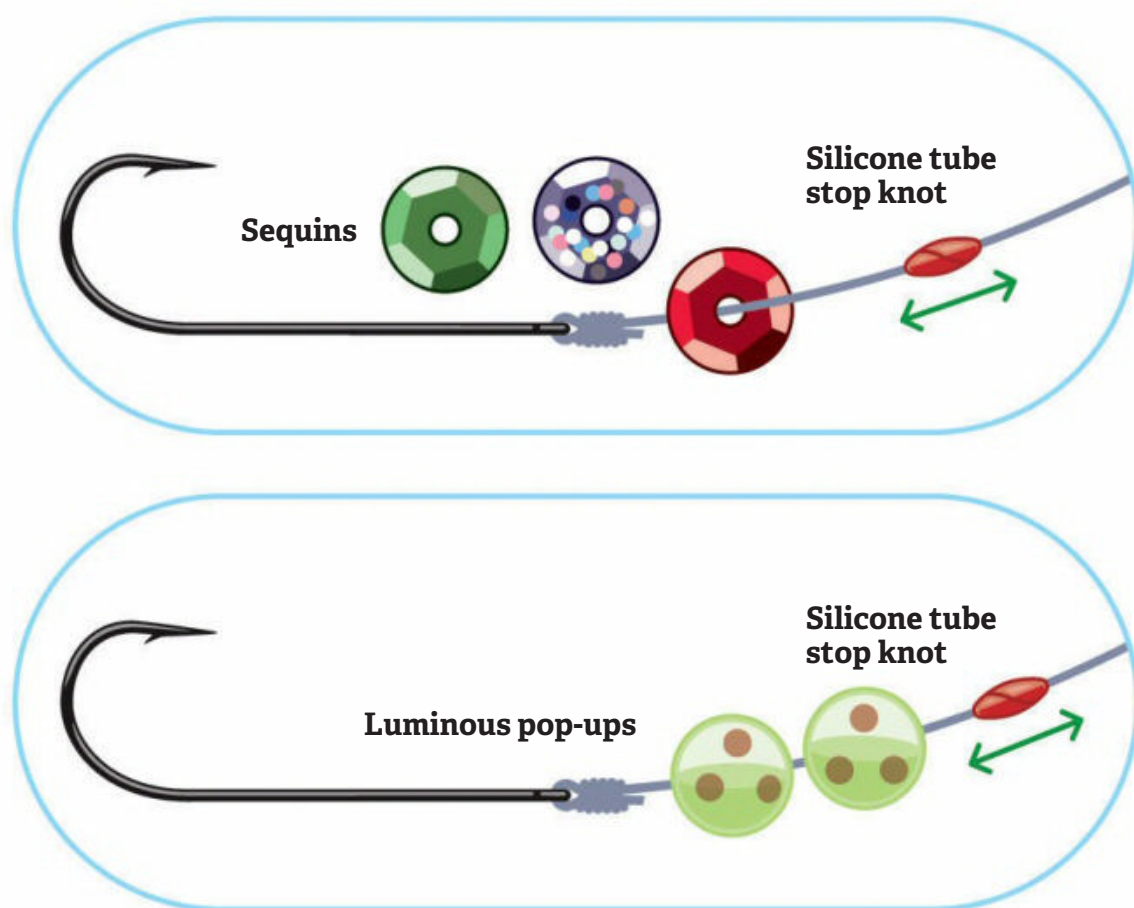
Thanks to the team at Boathouse Fisheries in St Mary's Bay for their help. If you are interested in learning more, we highly recommend signing up for one of their fish filleting courses, details of which can be found on the website at www.theboathousefisheries.co.uk

SEQUINS AND POP-UPS

Sequins are commonly used from both shore and boats as attractors for a variety of species. At this time of year many anglers will be using sequins to attract plaice, a species which is an inquisitive sight feeder and responds well to bright sequins in combination with bait. A stop knot is used to ensure the sequins don't slide up your hooklength and remain just above your baited hook when fishing. Simply slide any combination of colours on to your hooklength, generally to a maximum of six sequins per hook, before tying on your hook.

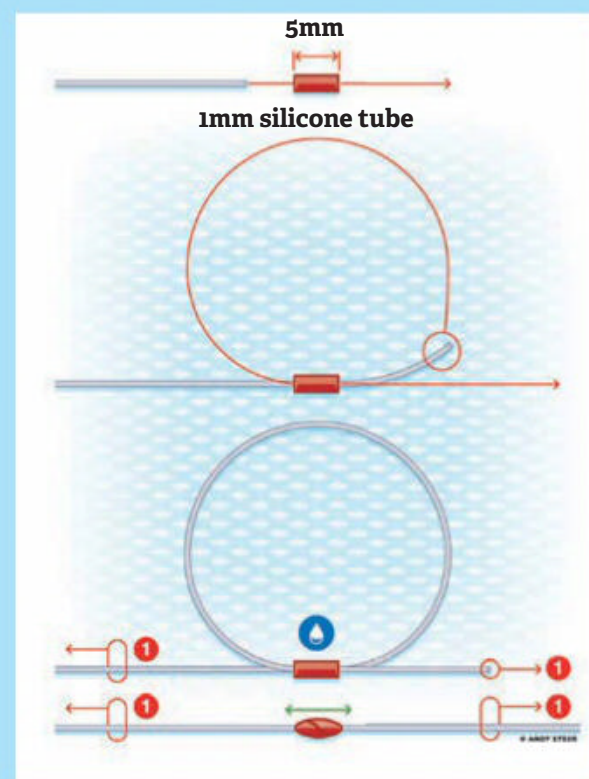
Pop-up beads are multi-functional; luminous pop-ups act as attractors in a similar way to sequins and can be particularly

useful in low light levels or turbid water conditions. However, their main function is to float the hook in the water column ensuring you can fish at different depths where species may not be feeding on the seabed. In addition, pop-ups are used to prevent baits being stolen by crabs by raising the hook and bait off the seabed. As with sequins, a stop knot is required to ensure the pop-ups do not float up your hooklength when fishing. The size and number of pop-ups will depend on the hook and bait being used. Pop-ups will struggle to float large hook sizes and heavy baits. Don't confuse pop-up beads with standard plastic beads which are not buoyant like pop-ups.



STOP KNOT

Cut 5mm of 1mm silicone tubing and pass your hooklength line through it. Position the tube at the approximate point where you want to stop knot. Pass the same end of the hooklength line back through the silicone tube in the same direction as before, moisten the knot, and pull both ends of the line until the tube folds over itself and creates a knot that is secure but can be moved to the required position.



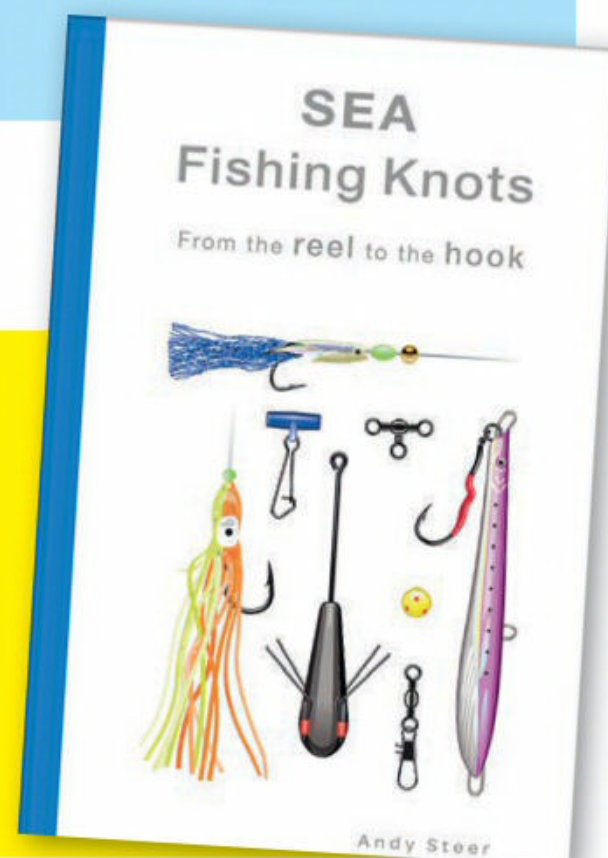
The silicone tube stop knot, a quick and easy way to create a moveable sliding stop knot.

SEA FISHING KNOTS - FROM THE REEL TO HOOK

Contains clear, concise, easy to follow step-by-step knot-tying illustrations by Andy Steer of recommended sea fishing/big game fishing knots and set-ups.

This publication should help you to gain a solid base of reliable, tried and tested knots, enabling you to land more fish. It will also help you protect the environment and save money by losing less tackle.

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GUY COTTEN

Words and images: Mike Thrussell

THE KIT YOU NEED FOR...

Bass fishing inside smaller estuaries is the perfect way to target these prized fish. They use the estuary channels as access routes from the open sea to the more productive inner estuary feeding grounds. This kit will help you to ambush the fish as they pass by.

ESTUARY BASS

RODS

Bass rods around 11ft 6in in length and rated to cast 2oz to 4oz have the length to cast a good distance when required but are also perfect for very close quarter fishing when casting just a few yards. They are also light enough to be held all the time to react to bites quickly, which can often make the difference between success and failure. Try to choose a rod with a supple tip. Bass can be shy feeders in shallow estuary channels, and a supple tip allows the angler to feel the initial interest of a bite at close range, but without alerting the fish that something is wrong.

■ TRONIXPRO BANZAI BASS
11FT 6IN 2-4OZS – RRP £107.99

BAITS

Worm baits, such as lug and rag, are obviously consistent baits for estuary bass, especially when fishing the main channel. Razorfish and whole medium sized sandeel are great too. Chop the head and tail off the sandeel and push the hook in through the tail and round the bend of the hook and up the hook shank. Add a few raps of bait elastic to keep it there. Best bait of all for estuary bass is peeler crab in chunks the size of a 50p piece. Add a few wraps of elastic to secure it. Don't be too neat with crab baits for bass, let the body juices ooze out for maximum effectiveness.

REELS

For ease of use, a fixed spool reel in the 5000 to 6000 sizing (depending on manufacturer) holding around 250m of 15lb line is ideal for all forms of estuary bass fishing. As for multiplier reels, look to a 6500 sized reel holding around 275m of 0.35mm (15lb) line. Multipliers with no level-wind system should be chosen for longer range casting with shock leaders as if using a level-wind multiplier the shock leader knot can catch in the level-wind eye and cause a crack off.

■ PENN WRATH 6000 FIXED SPOOL REEL – RRP £58.99
■ AKIOS S-LINE 656 CTM MULTIPLIER RRP – £115.99



RIGS & HOOK LENGTHS

A 1-hook clipped down rig is the right choice for longer range casting into deeper channels. For close range fishing a simple sliding ledger rig with a swivel link sliding on the leader or mainline, stopped by a 5mm bead, then tie on another swivel, proves to be excellent as it gives the bass the freedom to fully take the bait in, but also direct feel to the rod tip for instant bite detection. The hook length should be 20-inches in length and from 15lb to 20lb fluorocarbon.

■ BERKLEY TRILENE FLUOROCARBON 22LBS 55M – RRP £7.99

HOOKS

Longer shanked Aberdeen hooks in sizes 2/0 to 4/0 cover all longer-range casting situations when using worm baits. For bulkier baits like crab fished at close range, a Viking pattern with a wider gape is better. Again size 2/0 is ideal for general fishing, but for bigger bass a 3/0 or 4/0 should be used. Make sure the hook points are sharp as bass have bony mouths and hook penetration can be compromised if your hooks are blunt.

■ MUSTAD LONG SHANK WORM 2/0 90721NP-BR 25 HOOKS – RRP £5.50

■ SAKUMA 545 MANTA EXTRA 4/0 BOX OF 25 – RRP £6.30



LEADS

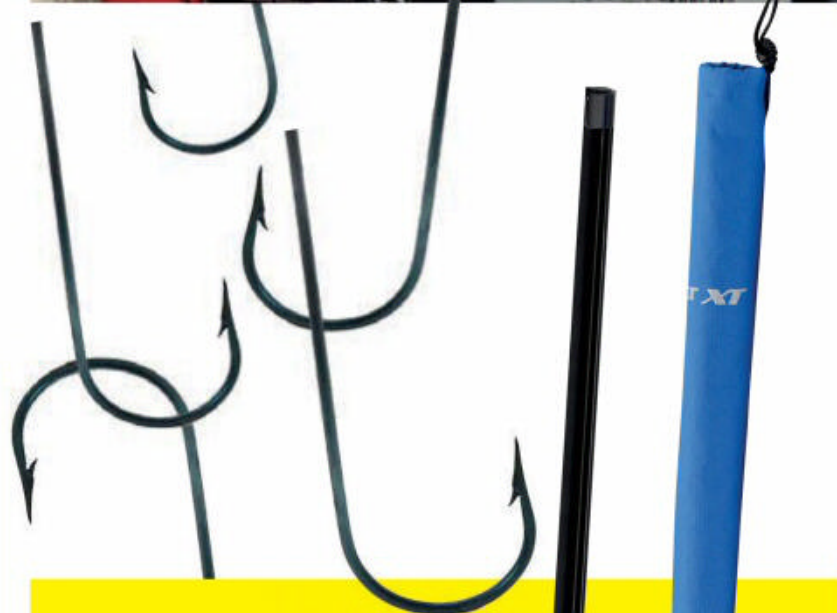
When fishing larger estuary channels with a tide run use release wire grip leads between 2oz and 3oz. For close range, and especially tight in in the bank edges, weeds beds and rougher ground, use the lightest lead you can get away with. 1oz or even 3/4oz is plenty to keep the bait anchored. The best leads for this are small bombs and use old leads that look dull and weathered, not brand-new shiny ones that can spook shy feeding bass.

MAINLINE & LEADER

If you're fishing into a main estuary channel with a fixed spool reel, then 20lb braid will help reduce tidal pressure on the line, improve bite detection, casting range, plus you can use lighter leads than you can with mono. However, for close range fishing, say in narrow estuary channels or when fishing the channel edges, a modern concept line between 12lb and 15lb that combines a co-polymer core with a surface coating of fluorocarbon gives great bite detection but also improves casting performance over standard and stiffer fluorocarbon but is less visual than braid.

On the 20lb braid fish a 30lb braid, mono or fluorocarbon leader with leads up to 3oz. For very close-range fishing, up to say 30 yards with leads no more than 1.5oz, you may not need a leader. If you do use a shock leader, go for 20lb fluorocarbon to minimise the chance of the fish seeing it.

■ BERKLEY FLUOROSHIELD 12LB FLUOROCARBON INFUSED CO-POLYMER MAINLINE – RRP £7.99



ROD REST

Rod rests can be heavy and bulky if you're looking to be more mobile to follow the bass. A push-in sand spike is more practical for both main channel and backwater fishing and will take a single rod for rebaiting etc, plus it is much lighter and to carry.

■ SHAKESPEARE SAND SPIKE – RRP £25.99

Words and images: John Holden

MORE HEIGHT, LESS EFFORT

Get your casting angle right by avoiding these two common errors and you'll see immediate improvement in your distance

Plenty of height on the cast is rarely a bad thing. A trajectory of around 40-degrees is about right, but the angle isn't critical for beach work. Aim for reasonable height where the rig neither skims the water nor towers into the sky like a rocket but falls short of the mark.

A nice trajectory maximises casting range and ensures a bit of slackness in the line when the rig hits the water. If line is tight at that point, which it probably will be with a low cast, bait clips tend to stick rather than release cleanly. Modest line tension on splashdown is a great help in that respect, especially with relay rigs where several hooks must be released.

Low casts are triggered by two common culprits. Whether we use a simple overhead cast or a big pendulum, a mighty push with the right arm and shoulder prevents a rod from working properly and automatically drives the rig low, often to the left. An over-dominant

right side is probably the biggest single mistake in casting. The obvious step is to produce a better balance between left and right arms.

HEADS UP

The second crucial factor is head position. Although this might seem to be irrelevant, what the head does has a massive effect on casting regardless of style. Its position shapes the entire cast. Most people focus on a spot out to sea where they want the cast to land. In other words, they're looking low and thus their head is down.

In almost any sport that involves aiming, it is important to focus on what you want to hit, and thus in fishing it seems logical to look at the water. But our focal point must be a spot in the sky where we want the rig to reach peak height. Look high and in the direction you want the cast to fly, not at the sea.

Left hand control is most easily learned with an overhead style. Set up with the rod held about horizontal and at head height. Focus up where you want the cast to go - and it doesn't hurt to overdo the height at first. Forget the right hand. Pull down with the left, which creates the right dynamics within the rod so that it loads early and throws high.

As you get used to the new action, notice that the trajectory automatically changes in step with where you're looking. Focus higher, cast higher. Focus lower, cast lower. After a while all that's necessary is to choose the point where you want the rig to go. Higher if there's a tail wind so that the cast carries farther. Slightly lower for headwinds.

Some rods naturally throw differently from others. With overhead casting, a long stiff rod generally throws higher than average whereas a softer one may tend to go lower. Adjusting the leader drop also helps determine cast height, but left-hand control is the biggest factor by far. Get it right, and most rods will do what you want. ■

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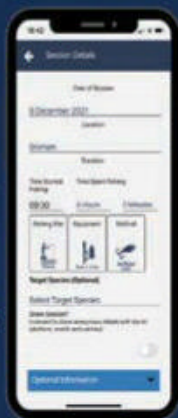
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GETTING TO THE POINT

When did you last check or sharpen your hook points or fishing knife? Blunt hooks mean lost fish and blunt knives mean missing fingers – here's how to avoid both

Sea anglers are curious creatures. We spend hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds on having the best rods, reels, torches, tripods, cameras, terminal tackle and apparel. We spend innumerable hours tying rigs, collecting bait, researching the best possible venues to improve our catches, or finding that special PB fish. Some of us are marvellous researchers, having all of the qualities of a highly skilled detective. Even after all that planning and effort, we sometimes overlook the smallest of details that can dramatically increase our catches, making the difference between a success and a failure. The margins are often very fine indeed. I believe one of the most criminal sins of your average angler is fishing with blunt hooks, and I'll explain why.

PENETRATION

Anyone who has handled a fish surely knows that many species have hard, almost armoured, exterior areas around their mouths. Even the interior of the mouths of some species can be very tough, akin to gristle or cartilage. To penetrate this tough area, you need your hooks to be razor-sharp. I've seen many anglers strike a bite and wonder why they've not hooked up, or where the fish comes free after a few winds. There can be a multitude of reasons for this but one of the main ones is hooks that are not sharp enough for the job.

Many anglers out there use new hooks each session and assume that their brand-new hooks can't be a problem, particularly if they are chemically etched. If you head down to Chesil Beach in Dorset and have six casts, I guarantee that your hooks are significantly less sharp than when you first put them on. If you have 12 casts, more often than not, they'll be blunt. The reason is that your hook points are contacting shingle or other objects on the way in, and it is taking away the thin penetrative point. In the larger sizes of



hooks, like a 6/0, this is very obvious but, I see almost nobody out there fishing that owns, or seems to use, a sharpening file.

MARGINAL GAINS

I can remember watching one of the best anglers I have ever seen just over a decade ago while conger fishing. Between every cast, he was checking the points of his hooks as part of his baiting up ritual. If they needed work, he would be there with a diamond file, striking at the point of the hook meticulously at an acute angle. It was enough to instantly make me seek out one of these small files on eBay. If someone else is outperforming you on the beach, small variables will give them the edge; it's worth analysing them and understanding small things like this that make a big difference.

Depending on the steel of the hooks, some will keep their sharpness for longer, but any that strike against shingle or stones will become blunt quickly. There is a simple test if you want to know if your hooks are sharp enough. Take the point of the hook and very gently run it along your fingernail. If the point scores the surface of the nail easily, displaying white keratin, it's sharp enough. If it doesn't leave a mark at all, it's probably blunt. If you're more careful, you can check with your ►

If you're after specimen fish and new PBs, but you're not checking the points on your hooks regularly, then you'll be missing some wonderful fish

finger but, it isn't wise to puncture your own skin, even though anglers, including myself, do it frequently by accident.

Sharpening hooks is very easy. All you need to do is strike the hook gently at a very acute angle (around 10-degrees) with a diamond sharpening file. Each time you strike the file running down toward the point, make sure you rotate the hook slightly so that you sharpen the point evenly. Make sure you don't change the angle from 10-degrees to a more generous angle as you go over the tip; all you'll do is further blunt the hook. The striking of the hook must always be at a very acute angle. It's very easy, and there is something quite rewarding about doing it.

EZE-LAP

The brand I have used almost exclusively is Eze-Lap USA. They cost around £6 on eBay or at a selection of tackle shops in the UK. They are very light, about 5-6 inches long, and durable. They use a diamond grit, and I have had to replace only one after many years of use. There are various textures, including super-fine (blue), fine (red), medium (purple), coarse (black) and extra coarse (green). The red (fine) is perfect for most hooks, the blue (super-fine) can be very useful for putting an edge on a hard steel knife, and the coarse ones are better for bringing a point to something like a gaff head. I generally keep a blue and a red file in my bag, which do everything I need.

I can't emphasise it enough; if you're after specimen fish and new PBs but you're not checking the points on your hooks regularly, then you'll be missing some wonderful fish.

BLADES

We've all used a blunt knife and found it not only frustrating but almost counterproductive. Instead of slicing, you are tearing at the fish or bait. I see anglers session after session using the same untreated knife. You might, in fact, cause yourself a nasty injury by neglecting your blade, which is contrary to popular thought. We use a blunt butter knife for shelling slipper limpet,



which makes sense, as you need something stiff and pretty crude; there is no cutting or slicing involved. So using a knife without a sharp edge makes perfect sense. If you are filleting a fish, you need a razor-sharp edge on the blade. It's the same if you are cutting bait on a chopping board. We are creatures of habit and routine; we pick up a knife and usually cut with the same part, time and time again. If you're cutting on rock, a seat box or bucket lid, or even a chopping board (recommended), your blade gets blunt quickly. It happens in the same place where you most often cut. You end up with 20 per cent of the blade blunt and 80 per cent sharp. If that knife then slips, you are at risk of injuring yourself with the 80 per cent. Whereas if the whole blade had been optimally sharp, you'd have been less likely to have the knife slip in the first place.

STEEL QUALITY

What kind of a knife do you use for fishing? There is a common misconception amongst anglers who think filleting knives are for chopping into a board, slicing bone, or

cutting fishing line. I can inform you that they are certainly not! Filleting knives are often made using a relatively soft type of steel that is incredibly flexible, as a bend is required when running the blade along the central bony structure of a fish to extract the fillets. This soft steel is very quick and easy to sharpen. It can be done in as little as 30 seconds. For everything else, you want to get yourself a general-purpose knife that is more akin to your kitchen knives, made of hard steel. If you get a good quality one, they'll keep an edge for much longer, and they'll cope much better with slicing into a chopping board or other surfaces. Personally, I find sharpening my knives somewhat therapeutic and relaxing. I feel good when they again have a sharp edge back on them.

Sharpening a knife follows the same process as hooks. I find the safest and easiest way to do it is to keep the blade stationary and just strike the edge gently with the red Eze-Lap diamond file, doing one side and then the other. With knives, you'll have to judge the bevel angle yourself. It will be somewhere between a 17 and 22-degree angle. Usually, filleting knives will be a very fine angle, but

more robust general-purpose blades will have thicker steel and a greater angle (typically). Harder steels will take you a lot longer to bring them to a sharp edge. If you really want them to be razor-sharp, I suggest dropping down to the super-fine (blue) Eze Lap, as this will put a very sharp edge on the knife.

You're probably wondering if there is an easy way to tell if a knife is at the correct sharpness or if it could do with more work?! The easy way to check is to take a sheet of ordinary A4 paper and, cutting away from you or anyone in close proximity, slice the sheet of paper on the edge. If the blade passes through with ease, it is sharp enough; if the knife pulls at the paper, it's still not ready, keep sharpening. I use Marttiini knives, a company based in Finish Lapland, which has a long pedigree of forging steel and producing top quality tools. They have a great selection of fishing centric knives and accessories, including many filleting and general-purpose knives.

Please take great care when sharpening your knives or hooks; it is very easy to have an accident; always cut away from your body and others, and never use excessive force or haste; take your time to get the desired result. ■

IMAX

Ocean 1pc Flotation Suit

- Very lightweight of under 2kg
- Heavy duty 75x75D 100% polyester pongee shell fabric
- 100% waterproof of more than 8.000mm
- Low density EPE buoyancy foam
- Soft 210T 100% polyester taffeta lining
- Heavy duty 2-way front zip with double storm fillets
- High inner fleece-lined collar

RRP £169.99

OUR PRICE

£85

CODE	SIZE
SV16499	XL
SV16500	2XL

SALE

HALF PRICE



DAM

IMAX

Oceanic Thermo Suit

This 2-piece suit will keep you warm and dry on windy, cold days. When going on a boat, fishing on the pier or standing by the bank of the lake, the last thing you need to think about, is how to keep warm. This suit will protect you from Mother nature.

Please note that due to an ongoing brand change, some suits may feature a DAM logo.

RRP £134.99

OUR PRICE

£99.99

CODE	SIZE
SV21738	S
SV21739	M
SV21740	L
SV21741	XL
SV21742	2XL



BEST SELLER

FISHEAGLE
GET MORE THAN YOU PAY FOR

Expert MKII 2pc Flotation Suit

The latest edition of the best selling Expert 2-piece Flotation suit is state of the art and has been produced and conforms to ISO 12402-5 & 12402-6 regulations. This update has all the functions and quality that you are used too, but with a modern touch and extra safety features. Bib and Brace trousers that are certified as a 50 Newton Buoyancy Aid having been specially designed to elevate the top half of your body when in water.

The suit features a reflective tape for night safety, a stitched-in belt with ITW Nexus buckle and a CE 394 whistle. Made from a light, wind and water-resistant fabric, they provide comfort for any inclement trips day or night as well as safety in the water.

RRP £139.99

OUR PRICE

£109.99

CODE	SIZE
RE0852	S
RE0853	M
RE0854	L
RE0855	XL
RE0856	2XL
RE0857	3XL
RE0858	4XL



NEW

okuma

Distance Surf Arena Fixed Spool Reel

- Graphite blade body
- Worm shaft Oscillation system
- 1 one-way roller bearing
- Cold Forged Aluminium Distance spool
- Flex aluminium line clip
- Bail lock system
- Saltwater resistant epoxy paint



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
SV20018	DSA-60	0.40mm/210m	£59.99	£50.00

Shakespeare

Agility Surf Reels

Purpose built for UK beach fishing, Shakespeare's Agility Surf range are designed to handle saltwater use, and are thoroughly tested for reliability. Features a large capacity, distance casting spool, matched with a smooth drag system.



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
SP3392	70	20lbs/240yds	£64.99	£40.00
SP3391	80	15lbs/360yds	£66.99	£40.00

Shakespeare

Agility Saltwater FD Reel

The Agility Saltwater FD reels deliver a quality, saltwater proof reel for a great price. Holds up to 150m of 12lb mono or 300m of 30lb braid.



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
SP4008	40	150m/12lb	£55.99	£30.00
SP4009	60	200m/20lb	£59.99	£40.00

Abu Garcia

6500C3 CT Premium

The 6500C3 CT Premium edition is built to the same high standard as its label mate, the 6500C3 CT, but weighs in a whole 105g lighter, giving you a durable yet lightweight multiplier you can rely on.



CODE	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
PU1515	200yds/20lb	£209.99	£150.00

Best Selling Century Rods

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PRICE
CN0181	Graphex Match Beach	13ft 6	125-175g	£515
CN0182	Graphex Supermatch LD Beachcaster	13ft	50-150g	£499
CN0183	Graphex Ultralite ST Beachcaster	13ft	50-125g	£475
CN0394	Fireblade Surf	13ft	4-6oz	£275
CN0180	Tip Tornado Beach	13ft 6	4-7oz	£520
CN0064	Excalibur TT Beach	14ft 10	3.5-8oz	£650
CN0153	Eliminator T700	15ft	4-7oz	£565

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SEE OUR HUGE STOCK OF CENTURY RODS, INCLUDING BASS, BOAT & SPINNING RODS!

PENN

Rampage 2 Beachcaster Rods



Constructed from a blend of 24-ton carbon and featuring Fuji rings throughout perfect for almost all aspects of beach angling around the UK shores.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
PE1700	13ft	4-6oz	3	£119.99	£80.00
PE1807	14ft	80-120g	3	£149.99	£80.00
PE1806	14ft	120-170g	3	£169.99	£150.00

PENN

Rampage 2 Boat Rods

Engineered to be fished with braided fishing line, these rods can take the extra strain created by these hi-tech lines and will punish any fish.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
PE1706	7ft8	12-20lb	4	£84.99	£50.00
PE1707	7ft6	20-30lb	4	£84.99	£50.00
PE1708	7ft4	30-50lb	4	£84.99	£50.00
PE1709	7ft4	50lb	2	£84.99	£70.00
PE1818	7ft6	12lb	2	£89.99	£54.00
PE1817	7ft6	20lb	2	£89.99	£54.00

SONIK

Black Shore Rods

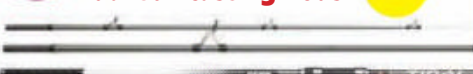


The SKS Black Shore Rods bring the world of top end surf rods to a whole new accessible level.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
SO0244	Multiplier	12ft	4-6oz	2	£79.99
SO0245	Multiplier	13ft	4-6oz	2	£89.99
SO0246	Multiplier	14ft	5-7oz	2	£99.99
SO0360	Fixed Spool	12ft	4-6oz	2	£79.99
SO0361	Fixed Spool	13ft	4-6oz	2	£89.99
SO0362	Fixed Spool	14ft	5-7oz	2	£99.99

Tidal Surfcasting Rods

NEW



Tidal stands for everything you need for surfcasting: Super strong but lightweight and responsive 30T carbon blanks that are designed to have the best distance properties.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
PE2301	14ft	50-200g	3	£126.99
PE2302	14ft	100-225g	3	£126.99
PE2303	14ft	100-250g	3	£126.99
PE2304	14ft	100-300g	3	£126.99

PENN

Squadron 2 SW Spinning Rods

The Squadron has a solid, durable and lightweight blank and packs plenty of casting power for saltwater lure fishing.

CODE	LENGTH	CASTS	PCS	NOW
PE1839	8ft	50-100g	2	£77.99
PE1840	8ft	75-150g	2	£77.99
PE1831	8ft	15-40g	2	£69.99
PE1832	9ft	20-50g	2	£69.99
PE1833	10ft	20-60g	2	£72.99
PE1837	8ft8	20-50g	5	£74.99
PE1834	8ft8	20-80g	4	£69.99
PE1836	8ft	15-40g	5	£69.99

PENN

Wrath Spinning Combos

NEW

Carbon spinning rods that are matched with the great PENN Wrath reels.

CODE	LENGTH	CASTS	PCS	NOW
PE2114	7ft	10-40g	2	£79.99
PE2115	8ft	20-40g	2	£84.99
PE2116	8ft	80-120g	2	£92.99
PE2117	9ft	30-60g	2	£92.99
PE2118	9ft	100-150g	2	£99.99
PE2119	10ft	20-80g	2	£99.99

Leeda

ICON FXD Beach Rods

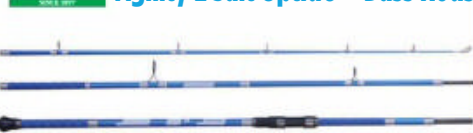
SALE

- Made from Torayco® carbon
- Fuki K Guides
- Fuji DPS reel seat
- Spliced Carbon hybrid tip
- Ergonomically designed Rubber grips

CODE	MDL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
LD14565	Elite	14ft	100-200g	3	£949.99	£195
LD14566	Elite	15ft	100-200g	3	£959.99	£195

Shakespeare

Agility 2 Salt Uptide + Bass Rods



A fast taper, lightweight blank made from high grade carbon and designed to be held for long periods.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
SP3936	Uptide	9ft 6	5-10oz	2	£75.00
SP3934	Bass	11ft	60-120g	5	£70.00

Shakespeare

Agility 2 Boat Salt Rod Series



These rods feature lightweight, fast actioned, yet powerful blanks designed to maximise bite detection.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
SP3940	Boat	7ft	20lb	2	£40.00
SP3941	Boat	7ft	30lb	2	£40.00
SP3944	Braid	8ft	20-30lb	2	£50.00
SP3945	Expedition	7ft	20-30lb	4	£50.00
SP3946	Expedition	7ft	20-50lb	4	£50.00

Shakespeare

Agility 2 Exp Bass & Beach Rods

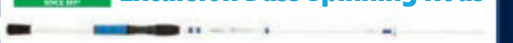


The Agility 2 Expedition will prove very popular for the modern sea fisherman. The strength of these multi piece rods is exceptional and the action has not been adversely effected by the addition of the extra spigots.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
SP3934	Bass	11ft	60-120g	5	£70.00
SP3935	Beach	11ft 6	120-240g	5	£80.00

Shakespeare

Excursion Bass Spinning Rods



A custom PU grip enables these rods to be used in whatever conditions are thrown at you, especially on the shoreline. A white blank offers unparalleled bite indication and actions and lengths to cover all in-shore opportunities.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
SP4200	8ft	Med 15-40g	2	£44.99	£24.00
SP4202	8ft	Heavy 30-60g	2	£44.99	£25.00
SP4203	9ft	Heavy 30-80g	2	£49.99	£30.00
SP4204	9ft	Med 15-45g	2	£49.99	£25.00

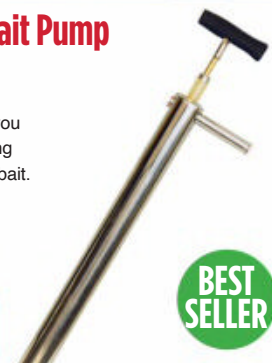
FISHEAGLE Bait Pump

Finished in stainless steel, the Fisheagle Bait Pump will save you hours of back breaking work retrieving fresh bait. Length: 50mm.

RE0230

RRP: £49.99

£39.99



BEST SELLER

GREYS Luggage

- 32 individual rig envelopes, plus two zipped pockets for added storage.
- Allows the angler to carry a rod with the reel attached to save time setting up.
- An all-purpose single session quiver to carry shore and boat rods.

	CODE	MODEL	NOW
A	GR2461	Rig Wallet	£14.00
B	GR2462	Holdall	£30.00
C	GR2463	Quiver	£25.00



Shakespeare Agility Luggage

- Packed with 20 separate resealable wallets.
- Adjustable zip extension system allowing the length to extend by 50cm if required for longer rods.
- Designed to be big enough to carry all the gear required, while remaining comfortable to carry.

	CODE	MODEL	NOW
A	SP3443	Rig Wallet	£16.00
B	SP3441	Rucksack	£25.00
C	SP3442	Quiver 145-190cm	£25.00



SAVAGE GEAR

Gravity Bass Stick Kit

A slim-profile, long-casting range of soft lures with a high specific gravity. This 30pc+17pc kit is ideal for those seeking to fish with these brand new lures but need each colour in the 3 tail types with hooks and weights.

BACK IN STOCK!

SV22099

RRP: £34.99

£24.99



Shakespeare Firebird Mackerel Outfit

The superb 10ft 2pc rod casts 4-6oz, letting you throw out a feather rig and lead weight for targeting Mackerel, with plenty of power for the fight, and features a modern abbreviated EVA handle, cushioned DPS reel seat and Titanium Oxide insert double leg guides.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP3820	10ft	4-6oz	2	£39.99	£30.00

Shakespeare Boat Outfit

This boat rod and reel combo is great value for money. Ideal for someone just starting fishing as it gives you a good chance to experience the thrill without a big bill. The reel is also loaded with 30lb line.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP4001	7ft	20-30lb	2	£49.99	£40.00

Shakespeare Firebird Beachcaster Outfit

The Shakespeare Firebird Rod and Reel Combo is a 2 piece mid-action rod with a fixed spool reel that comes pre-spooled with 20lb clear mono. Easy to put together and use, it's ideal for kids and beginner or intermediate anglers, or as an affordable backup or occasional use rod.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP3809	12ft	4-8oz	2	£49.99	£35.00

Shakespeare Firebird Spinning Outfits

Designed to cover most UK light to medium spinning applications. The blanks are strong and slim at the price point with medium actions that will allow beginner and kids to cast easily. The reel is also loaded with 6lb line.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP3815	9ft	20-80g	2	£42.99	£25.00
SP3816	8ft	15-60g	2	£39.99	£24.00

SHIMANO STC Rods

The STC Boat rods are the ultimate sea spinning rods and cater for both shore and boat fishing situations.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SU12363	Travel Spin	8ft 2	14-40g	6	£164.99
SU12364	Travel Spin	8ft 2	50-100g	6	£174.99
SU12344	Travel Spin	8ft 10	50-100g	5	£134.99
SU14275	Boat Spin	8ft	150-300g	4	£134.99
SU12365	Shore Boat	9ft 10	150-300g	4+2	£184.99

Shakespeare Agility HRF/LRF Rods

A new concept rod designed to work small lures and jig heads up to 40gms from boats targeting smaller ground dwelling species such as wrasse, small pollack, cod, coalfish, gurnards, bream, plaice, haddock and whiting.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SP3484	6ft 7	0.5-7g	2	£28.00
SP3485	7ft	5-15g	2	£30.00

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SP3948	8ft	10-20g	2+2	£45.00
SP3949	8ft 6	20-40g	2+2	£45.00

Shakespeare Omni Surf Rods

Shakespeare's great value Omni range is ideal for beginners and more experienced anglers alike, these rods maximise performance and quality at this key Shakespeare price point.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP3994	10ft	4-6oz	3	£39.99	£30.00
SP3995	12ft	4-6oz	3	£49.99	£40.00
SP3996	12ft	4-6oz	3	£49.99	£40.00

Abu Garcia Ambassador C 7000

The 7000 series from Abu Garcia has long been a mainstay for a wide variety of target species and methods, and now it's stronger and more ergonomic than ever.

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	PRICE
PU4202	7000 RHW	230m/0.46mm	£137.99
PU4203	7001 LHW	230m/0.46mm	£137.99

TFGear Force8 Competition Tripod

- Fully extended fishing height nearly 8ft
- V shaped main leg
- Round legs fold and clip into main frame
- Fully adjustable butt cap rod rest
- Inbuilt trace hanger hooks and center hook for luggage/buckets
- Pack down height of 6ft
- Weight 2.8kg

AF5248
RRP: £59.99
£40

DAIWA J-Braid Grand

Introducing J-BRAID x8 GRAND, the new Ultimate Braid in Daiwa's J-Braid Family. Strong, and resistant to abrasion yet well-bodied enough to lay smoothly on the spool.

LEN	11LB 0.06MM	15LB 0.10MM	19LB 0.13MM	22LB 0.16MM	28LB 0.18MM	RRP	NOW
135m	-	-	-	DW9816	DW9817	£31.99	£15
270m	DW9823	DW9824	DW9825	DW9826	DW9827	£47.99	£25

LEN	35LB 0.20MM	43LB 0.22MM	49LB 0.24MM	58LB 0.28MM	79LB 0.35MM	RRP	NOW
135m	-	-	-	-	DW9822	£31.99	£15
270m	DW9828	DW9829	DW9830	DW9831	DW9832	£47.99	£25



FISHEAGLE Saracen Beachcaster Outfit



- Fisheagle Saracen Beachcaster 13ft 4-8oz 3pc Rod
- Shakespeare Agility Surf 70 Reel
- Fisheagle Rig Wallet and 10 Assorted Bait Rigs
- Lureflash Powerstorm Monofilament

U116FSH
RRP: £171.96
£89.99

AXIA Small Kyoto Seat Box

A simple two-level tackle box that is ideal for both the boat and shore angler. The top half of the box opens independently from the bottom half and features separate compartments for organising tackle.

CODE	COLOUR	RRP	NOW
TX6796	Fluoro Green	£28.99	£27.99
TX6798	Green	£28.99	£27.99
TX6800	Orange	£28.99	£27.99

MARUKYU Isome Worms

These supremely versatile worms are available in a range of colours and sizes, with their extremely lifelike bodies and action proving irresistible fished in a range of methods.

FULL RANGE
AVAILABLE ON
OUR WEBSITE!

ALL WORMS
FROM ONLY
£6.99



FISHEAGLE Aberdeen Hook 9146

Sporting a strong yet fine wire with a micro barb, these hooks ensure maximum hooking ability. **100 per pack.**

CODE	SIZE	RRP	NOW
TA1812	4	£6.99	£3.99
TA1813	2	£6.99	£3.99
TA1814	1	£6.99	£3.99
TA1815	1/0	£7.99	£3.99
TA1816	2/0	£7.99	£3.99
TA1817	3/0	£8.99	£3.99
TA1818	4/0	£8.99	£4.99
TA1819	6/0	£11.99	£5.99



IRONPIPER Guerilla Beachcaster Rods

A well priced continental rod that packs a punch at a price everybody can afford. Ideally suited to fishing clean beaches when targeting species such as flounder, whiting, plaice and dogfish.

CODE	LENGTH	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
TX7658	13ft 6	100-200g	2	£89.99
TX7656	13ft 7	100-200g	3	£85.99
TX7657	14ft 7	100-200g	3	£89.99

WESTIN Salty Lures

This bestselling Westin lure has it all.

COLOUR	7CM / 12G	9CM / 18G	11CM / 26G
Canned Sardine	WN2086	WN2104	WN2122
GFR	WN2088	WN2106	WN2124
Dotted Sardine	WN2089	WN2107	WN2125
Diamond Thief	WN2090	WN2108	WN2126
Pattengrisen	WN2093	WN2111	WN2129
3D Yellow Ayu	WN3177	WN3184	WN3191
3D Brown Headlight	WN3178	WN3185	WN3192
3D Sparkling Herring	WN3179	WN3186	WN3193
UV Hottie Pearl	WN3180	WN3187	WN3194
PRICE	£5.99	£6.50	£6.99

FULL RANGE
AVAILABLE ON
OUR WEBSITE!

FISHEAGLE Hunt Lures

NEW

The all-new Fisheagle Hunt Lures are deadly for all salt and freshwater fish.

COLOUR	28G 12CM	43G 14CM
Green/Silver	TA2529	TA2534
Fluro/Green/Yellow	TA2530	TA2535
Fluro/Red/Black	TA2531	TA2536
Black Pearl	TA2532	TA2537
Silver Pearl	TA2533	TA2538
RRP	£4.99	£5.50
PRICE	£2.99	£3.50



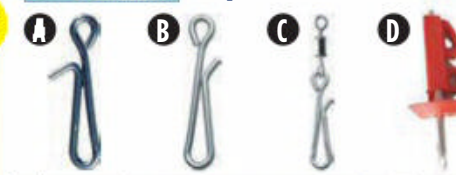
SAVAGE GEAR Sandeel V2 2+1 Pack

This super realistic sandeel imitation will fool even the wariest of predator fish.

COLOUR	12CM 22G	14CM 33G	16CM 46G	17.5CM 65G
Green Silver	SV23661	SV23667	SV23673	SV23679
Khaki	SV23662	SV23668	SV23674	SV23680
White Pearl Silver	SV23663	SV23669	SV23675	SV23681
Blue Pearl Silver	SV23664	SV23670	SV23676	SV23682
Lemon Back	SV23665	SV23671	SV23677	SV23683
Pink Pearl Silver	SV23666	SV23672	SV23678	SV23684
PRICE	£7.99	£8.99	£9.99	£10.99

EVEN MORE V2 LURES AVAILABLE ONLINE!

Gemini Clips



	CODE	MODEL	PCS	PRICE
A	GE0040	Rig Clip	15	£2.60
B	GE0042	Link Clip	15	£2.60
C	GE0044	Swivel 'n' Link Clips	5	£2.60
D	GE0157	Splash Down Solo Bait Clip	5	£3.35

SAVAGE GEAR Sandeel Pencil Lures

Extreme long cast design for amazing coverage. Supplied with both a single and a treble hook, with the option to add the treble hook to the belly as well.

COLOUR	9CM 13G	15CM 30G
Sandeel	SV21960	SV21522
Sandeel Ghost	SV21961	SV21523
Black Silver	SV21962	SV21524
Motor Oil UV	SV21963	SV21525
Black&Red UV	SV21964	SV21526
Matt White Tobis	SV21965	SV21527
RRP	£8.99	£10.99
PRICE	£7.99	£9.99

COLOUR	9CM 13G	12.5CM 19G	15CM 30G
Black Copper UV	SV21966	SV21528	-
Blue Silver UV	SV21967	SV21529	-
Matte White	SV23235	SV23240	SV23245
Black Pearl	SV23236	SV23241	SV23246
Lemon Back	SV23237	SV23242	SV23247
Cotton Candy	SV23238	SV23243	SV23248
Sayoris	SV23239	SV23244	SV23249
PRICE	£7.99	£9.99	£10.99

SAVAGE GEAR 3D Line Thru Sandeel Lures

COLOUR	8.5CM 11G	11CM 15G	12.5CM 19G	15CM 27G
Sandeel	SV19558	SV19016	SV17836	-
Sandeel Ghost	SV19559	SV19017	SV17837	SV17843
Motoroil UV	SV19560	SV19019	SV17841	SV17847
Black & Red UV	SV19561	SV19020	SV19353	-
Black N Yellow Glow	SV19562	SV19354	SV19350	SV19352
Black Ghost	-	-	SV17839	SV17845
Gold Pout	SV20550	-	SV20560	-
Pink Pout	SV20552	-	SV20562	-
Matt White Tobis	-	-	SV19349	SV19351
RRP	£8.99	£9.99	£11.99	£14.99
PRICE	£7.99	£8.99	£9.99	£12.99

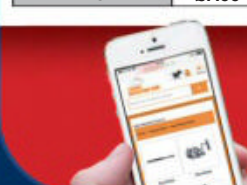
A 3D Scan of a real sandeel, has provided the perfect details and body shape for this great line-thru hard lure!



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FIRST LOOK

Your update on the latest gear arriving in the tackle shops



SIMMS G3 GUIDE WADERS – STOCKINGFOOT

Simms' long-standing, award-winning, wader is back with an exciting update to the material package, improved fit, and an enhanced feature set.

The new G3 has an updated material lamination package with even more durable, breathable, and comfortable Gore-Tex 3-layer upper and Gore-Tex Pro 4-layer lower. Other features include:

- Adjustable spacer air-mesh suspender system with a fabric suspender divider and integrated webbing attach point for net carry

- Top access zippered stretch pocket plus zippered, reach-through micro-fleece lined hand-warming chest pocket
- The upper organization also includes a removable Tippet-Tender Pocket and a zippered stretch-woven interior flank pocket on wearer's left
- Built-in low-profile back belt loops with high and low options; 2 inch stretch nylon belt included
- Patented front and back leg seams deliver articulated fit, improved mobility, and increased durability
- Patented, abrasion-resistant, built-in Gravel Guards
- Anatomically engineered neoprene stockingfeet with anti-microbial finish
- RRP £699.99



VASS CULTURE HOODIE

This is a premium quality hoodie which is well fitted to size. The main feature is a very useful chest pocket with zip. Other features include hand pockets, a double layer hood and a brushed fleece fabric reverse for extra warmth and comfort. The zippered chest pocket has been designed for keeping items such as mobile phones and keys secure. The placement of this pocket has also been designed to work well for anglers who are wearing chest waders. Available in khaki green or black.

- RRP £47.98

RATING SYSTEM

Our testers and reviewers use their experience to evaluate the quality and functionality of tackle to provide independent, credible and authoritative advice for our readers. On some pages, you may see the following endorsements

SeaAngler
EXPERT
CHOICE

Tackle which our testers or reviewers recommend to our audience.

SeaAngler
BEST
BUY

Tackle we believe is the best when tested or reviewed against direct competitor products.

SeaAngler
★★★★★
5 STAR

Some products reviewed will be awarded a star rating ranging from 0-5.

SHIMANO ULTEGRA FC RANGE

The new Ultegra range of reels from Shimano is the evolution of one of their most popular mid-priced reels. Containing many of the latest technical features found on top-of-the-range Shimano reels like Stella, the new Ultegra range offers remarkable value. The combination of HAGANE Gear, MicroModule II, X-Ship and Silent Drive ensures the very best winding performance, even under pressure, with remarkable smoothness that enhances the fishing experience. X-Protect technology prevents water getting into the moving parts of the line roller and roller clutch, extending longevity and delivering failsafe performance. For distance casting, the Long Stroke Spool design and AR-C Spool enables the line to flow more freely during the cast and the addition of a CI4+ Body reduces overall weight for less fatigue when fishing for extended periods. Available in 1000-5000 size.

■ RRP from £119.99

MAXRAP WALK'N ROLL

Rapala have launched new patterns for 2022 of this 'do-all' top water lure. Developed in partnership with pro anglers fishing the Atlantic, this lure is weighted for Maximum casting distance and ultimate stability in bad weather and rough seas. Under a steady retrieve the MaxRap Walk'N Roll spits and rolls from side-to-side. Try a twitch and pause to create a walking action. Crank it in fast to imitate a fleeing baitfish or, when at rest with your rod tip down, twitch it in place for a head-down bobbing motion.

■ RRP: £14.29

PENN WATERPROOF ROLLUP BAG

The Penn Waterproof Rollup Bag has a 40-litre capacity and works with an easy roll up and click closure system. The bag will perfectly fit your camera and all other belongings that should not get wet during a fishing trip. Next to that, the bag comes with a comfortable carry handle.

This bag would be extremely useful for anglers in all the different disciplines of our sport. Whether fishing from the rocks, beach or boat, it will offer great protection for your equipment ensuring everything stays dry and dirt-free.

■ RRP: £59.99



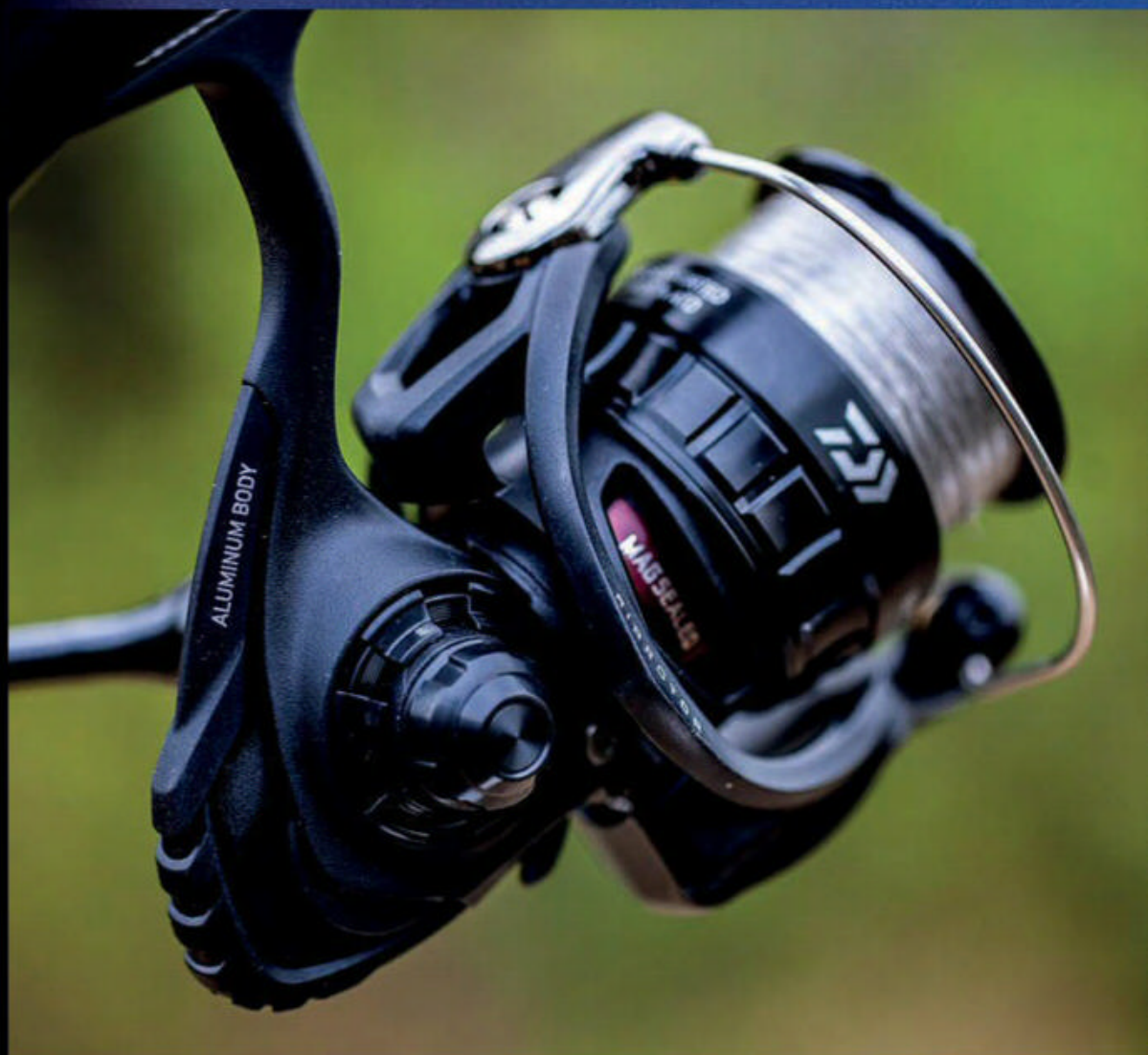
MAGNIFICENT

Chris Kennedy gives his verdict on both the 2500 and 5000 sizes of these Daiwa spinning reels, designed to be the ultimate in saltwater resistance

DAIWA BG MAGSEALED 2500
RRP: £175

DAIWA BG MAGSEALED 5000
RRP: £205

SeaAngler
EXPERT
CHOICE



I first acquired the Daiwa BG 2500 for my LRF and lure work in 2020 and spooled it with 15lb J-Braid Grand. Since then, it has done an enormous amount of work, chasing species like squid, bass, pollock, black bream, mackerel and scad. I would highlight that it also has this mag sealed technology. Unfortunately, I am not a guy who routinely rinses my reels. I look for ones that have high-quality components that offer corrosion resistance, which in turn means longevity of use. They feel so powerful for such a tiny reel; the drag is smooth, and they'll handle anything in the class you are aiming at. The reel is running just as smoothly as when I took out of its box from new.

UP-SIZING

I was so pleased with the 2500, I ordered another BG Magsealed, this time the 5000 size. I intended to use it for beachcasting on the lighter bait rods and potentially for heavy lure fishing, generally casting up to around 125g (4oz) as a maximum. I wanted

something more lightweight than my 6500 Saltists, but with a substantial high-drag capacity, if I ended up taking it abroad. The 5000 Magsealed didn't disappoint; I've used it religiously whenever I have been on smooth to mixed ground, primarily for species like black bream but also putting it through its paces catching double figure huss and conger at times.

The 5000 is a perfect option for the avid beach angler who wants a robust reel built to last and tackle the larger fish with ease. Like its little brother, it also has a lovely smooth drag, a fabulous retrieve, a powerful handle and good solid gears. Since its purchase, I have observed no degradation in performance, and I think it represents tremendous value for money, even if it is on the pricey side for many anglers. We can't all afford a Saltiga, or even a Saltist, but these great looking BGs are a compromise with a lot of the tech that is incorporated in its more expensive cousins.

For specifically fishing heavy ground, and for the UK's largest species like common skate, big stingray or tope, you may wish to look at the 6500 or 8000

sizes. The differences are largely in the reels' weight, retrieve and maximum drag capacity. They scale up incrementally.

If there is one thing I would make for the future if I were Daiwa, it would be a hybrid Magsealed BG for bass anglers that incorporates a bait runner option. As a brand, they make some excellent bait runners for carp fishing and other freshwater species but I would love to see a BG that offers this functionality in 3000, 3500, 4000 and 5000 sizes. ■





SPECIFICATIONS

DAIWA BG MAGSEALED 2500

- Hard Bodyz body in anodised aluminium
- Air Rotor
- Magsealed technology
- ATD Automatic Drag System clutch with carbon discs
- Digigear II technology
- 6 Ball bearings
- Twistbuster wire guide roller
- Infinity Anti Reverse
- ABS II coil
- Maxdrag:7kg/15.4lb
- Ratio:5.6:1
- Retrieve:84cm/33.2inch
- Reel weight:275g
- Capacity nylon
mm/m:0.25/190,0.28/155,0.30/130
- Capacity braid lb/
yds:15/190,20/160,30/120

DAIWA BG MAGSEALED 5000

- Hard Bodyz body in anodised aluminium
- Air Rotor
- Magsealed technology
- ATD Automatic Drag System clutch with carbon discs
- Digigear II technology
- 6 Ball bearings
- Twistbuster wire guide roller
- Infinity Anti Reverse
- ABS II coil
- Max drag:10kg/22lb
- Ratio:5.7:1
- Retrieve:120cm/47.5inch
- Reel weight:645g
- Capacity nylon
mm/m:0.35/500,0.40/380,0.45/280
- Capacity braid lb/
yds:40/480,50/360,65/310



LOVING THE LABRAX

Sea Angler's lure fishing supremo, Henry Gilbey, puts HTO's new N70 Labrax Special four-piece travel lure rod through its paces

HTO N70 LABRAX SPECIAL
TRAVEL RRP: £479.99

SeaAngler
EXPERT
CHOICE

If this brand new HTO N70 Labrax Special Travel lure rod 9' 4" 7-42g ended up as even 75 per cent as good as its amazing 2-piece sibling, which has been on the market for a while, I knew I would like it. I have fished a lot with the 2-piece version and it's one hell of a lure fishing rod which really suits how I like a rod to bend, recover, and fish.

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Four section 'Travel' version of the superb Labrax lure rod**
- **Length 9' 4"**
- **Casting 7 -42gm**
- **Pack-down size of 81.5cm (32inches)**
- **Built from 40ton carbon with an M4 resin and helical carbon tape wrap**
- **Fitted throughout with Fuji Titanium Framed Torzite 2 K Spinning guides**
- **The Fuji VSS reel seat is flanked by a Winn Grip, as is the butt grip**

The good news here is that this 4-piece HTO N70 Labrax Special is easily as good as the 2-piece version, and for this I must doff my cap to the people at HTO for going all out to make a travel style lure rod fish as well as this. If I really concentrate then perhaps, I can feel 10 per cent more flex in the butt when I cast heavier lures, especially on the 4-piece version, but in the real fishing world this means nothing. If you are prepared to pay the nearly £400 asking price, then you will secure an incredibly useful lure fishing rod which I know will suit a lot of anglers and their casting styles. What's more, you have a 4-piece rod which is easy to fly with and perfect for anybody who likes to leave a bit of fishing gear in their car for any spur of the moment fishing opportunities which might arise.



The Fuji VSS reel seat



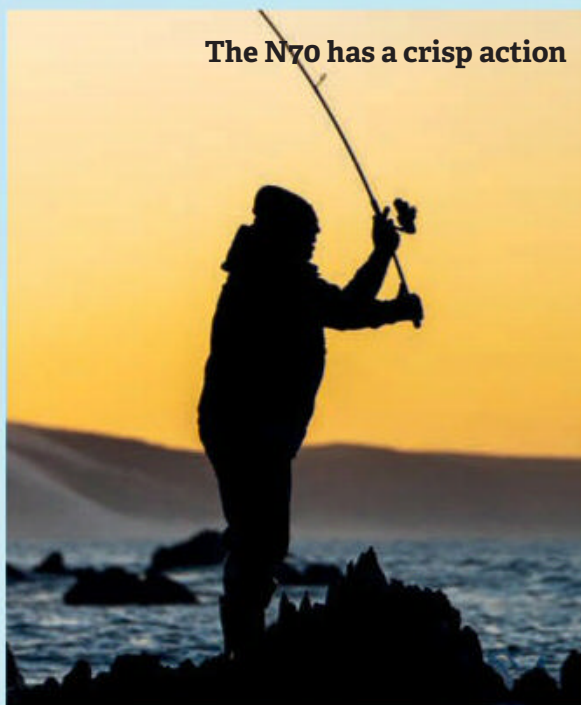
The WINN butt grip



PERFORMANCE

I love how 'sharp' this rod is, and by that I am trying to articulate to you how precise the feeling is when you put your lures out there. No sloppiness in the butt or mid-sections, but also not too much rigidity that your arms want to fall off after fishing with this rod for a few hours. My feeling is that HTO have worked on taking their existing, and very good, Nebula lure rod action and really upgraded it, and I believe they have done so successfully. It benefits from being very fast but not too overpowering, nice and light and crisp, with the ability to effectively and genuinely fish with a wide range of hard and soft lures. It's also got the most stunning tip on a lure rod that you could ever hope to see. I can blast a 40g Savage Gear Surf Seeker at full power and the rod isn't straining at all, but I can then scale down to a smaller and lighter surface lure and deftly work it across the top and I feel in complete control. With soft plastics this rod is a dream.

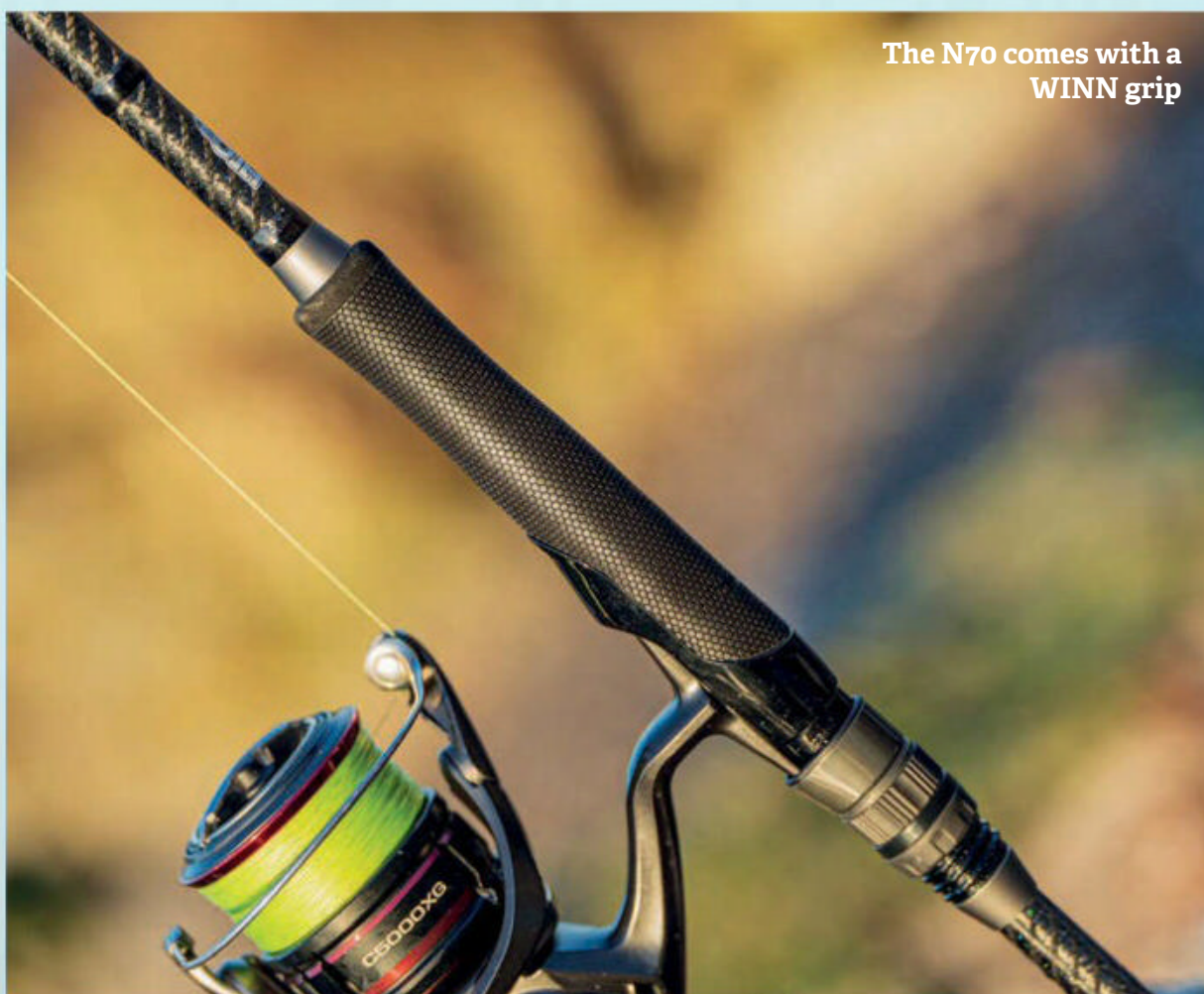
The N70 has a crisp action



QUALITY

If I was going to buy a travel lure rod for bass, wrasse and pollack then this would be the rod for me. The build quality is superb, albeit I'd prefer something a bit grippier behind where the reel sits on the Fuji VSS reel seat, and in a perfect world I like a handle length a smidgen shorter. These are minor quibbles though. The WINN grips work really well and I get used to them in no time over the EVA grips you find on most fishing rods. The only lingering niggle which, for me, slightly tarnishes such an impressive and expensive lure rod is that it doesn't come in a travel-ready tube, and the rod bag also feels and looks a bit cheap. I can easily knock a small rod tube up if I was going to travel with it, but I think HTO should have included a proper tube in a really good quality rod bag. This aside, we are talking about a seriously impressive 4-piece lure rod which fishes just as well as its equally impressive 2-piece sibling. ■

The N70 comes with a WINN grip





PENN SLAMMER IV 2500 AND 3500
RRP: FROM £239.99



SLAM DUNK

Henry Gilbey explains why Penn's new version of its popular Slammer range has become his go-to reel of choice



There is no getting away from how smooth and light so many of the Shimano and Daiwa spinning reels are these days. In fact, I would suggest that we have never had it so good on the reel front and how much we can get for our money. There's no doubt that these reels sit so well on our lure rods, and retrieving lures for hours on end is a joy, but what about if you are fishing in the surf and your spinning reels are getting a regular soaking from saltwater? Via a lot of experience with a lot of different spinning reels, I find myself turning to the Penn Slammer range of reels these days. While it used to be the Slammer III 3500, now there is a new Slammer IV range and there's a brand new, and smaller, 2500 size reel in there to go with all the other sizes. My life is complete! The Penn Slammers have an IPX6 sealed body and spool

design which offers good protection against hectic saltwater fishing where your reel is getting a proper splashing, or even the odd drowning. Surf fishing is the classic example, but I so love the robust and solid feeling I get with these reels that over time I have found myself fishing with them far more than I ever thought I would. I also choose not to obsess about the lightest possible spinning reel when in fact a little bit of extra weight on the butt end of many spinning rods can sometimes make the whole outfit feel a touch lighter in the hands. Now that Penn have seen fit to include a "baby" Slammer IV 2500 I am pretty much sorted. I can, and do, use the Slammer 2500 on virtually any lure rod I would take out bass fishing, but when it comes to the more powerful 9ft 6in and 10ft lure rods, this is when I think the larger Slammer IV 3500 works particularly well. ►



DRAG DESIGN

The one complaint I used to hear about the outstanding Slammer III 3500 and 4500 reels was that the loosest drag setting was still a bit tight. I don't happen to agree with this because I would love to see anglers fighting their fish much harder, but some of you will be pleased to know that the new Slammer IV reels have a much lighter drag setting. A Slammer is never going to be as smooth as the equivalent Shimano or Daiwa, indeed I don't think they can be with that IPX6 water resistant rating and those oversized gears, but once you get out fishing in the real world instead of turning a reel handle at home, Slammers are plenty smooth enough for what we need to do. They also become smoother over time which to me is the perfect excuse to get out fishing even more! Their solid, bombproof, feeling inspires so much confidence. I love the round EVA handle knob on the Slammer IV 2500 and I like the fact that with the Slammer IV 3500 you get a choice of the aluminium or EVA knobs. The one thing you need to know with a Slammer is don't get greedy with your line-level when fishing with the thin braids. Play it safe by underfilling it slightly and these reels will go on and on and on performing flawlessly for you. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

- Penn Slammer IV 2500 weighs 326g loaded with braid.
RPP £239.99
- Penn Slammer IV 3500 weighs 411g loaded with braid.
■ RRP £259.99
- Full metal body and sideplate
- CNC gear technology with brass main gear
- IPX6 sealed body and spool design
- Sealed Slammer® drag system with Dura-Drag™ (Sizes 3500-10500)
- HT-100™ carbon fibre drag washers (Size 2500 only)
- 8+1 stainless steel bearing system
- Hydrophobic line roller bearing
- Spare EVA handle knob (Sizes 3500-10500)
- Sizes 2500-5500 have automatic bail trip

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STEEL WORMS

What do you do in spring when you need a hook that will catch flatties and be relied upon to land any early season smoothhound? James Madsen offers one solution

COX & RAWLE LONG RANGE WORM RRP:RRP: £2.50

SPRING FISHING

During the spring months many anglers, myself included, like to get out targeting flatfish. I love plaice fishing during the spring, especially on those crisp, calm days with a clear blue sky. Along with just fishing for pleasure, I also have a run of fishing competitions in the spring, at many of which I will be targeting flatfish. However, as the temperatures begin to rise we will also start seeing many of these same venues producing smoothhounds and therein lies my problem. I don't want to sacrifice a good hook-up ratio when targeting smaller fish, with a heavier gauge of wire because of smoothhounds, or any other bonus fish for that matter. I want a hook which is suitable for catching small fish but still just about strong enough to land something bigger.

SOLUTION

One solution is the Long Range Worm hook from Cox & Rawle. This pattern of hook has quite a deep gape, a medium length shank and two barbs on that shank to help prevent your baits from slipping back off the hook. Made with a high content of good quality

steel, the wire will bend and not snap. They have a needle style point that makes these hooks more durable and you will find they stay sharper for longer. I'm more interested in a size 4 and a size 2 when targeting smaller fish during the spring, especially flatfish and small bass. Under closer inspection, you will see these hooks in aforementioned sizes look really compact and reasonably strong. I've actually already had some great results with the Long Range Worm hooks in the past, landing conger eels, rays and smoothhounds. Don't be fooled by the name either. Because of those barbs on the shank of the Long Range Worm this hook will also be a great pattern for a good selection of fish baits and peeler crab. I remember landing smoothhounds once on the



Long Range Worm hooks in a size 2 and that was while catching small bass and flounder at a fishing competition in South Wales. I've already landed some nice plaice on the Long Range Worm hooks this year and I have a match coming up a Chesil soon where this hook pattern will also come in very handy.

■ Available sizes: 4, 2, 1, 1/0, 2/0, 3/0



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IAN GOLDS MEMORI

After a two-year break Ian Bowell reports from Hythe in Kent on the newly renamed SAMF Masters

In honour of the late Ian Golds, a worldwide respected match angler, SAMF thought it a fitting tribute to rename the annual SAMF masters in Ian's memory. Following a two-year break due to Covid, the 2022 event took place at Hythe, Kent on Saturday the 18th and Sunday 19th March. One hundred and four anglers booked in, including a number of past Masters winners, along with some of the best match anglers from around the UK, including a smattering of lady and junior anglers. The weather leading up to the event was calm, with a high pressure settling in over the country leading to lots of talk of plaice and rays being the target species. As so often occurs, the weather threw a curve ball and a stiff easterly breeze greeted the anglers as they set up their beach shelters along the parade, sending preconceived plans into disarray.

DAY ONE

Although breezy, the water was still reasonably clear and from the start a few plaice started to show, along with dabs, whiting, a few small bass, the odd dogfish and smoothhound pups. Fishing times were 10-3pm both days, fishing the tide up and over. As the first match progressed it was clear it was going to test the angling ability of all taking part. The competitors had to work hard for their fish and anyone landing a dogfish or bass as part of their catch was considered having caught a bonus fish. As it turned out, the biggest fish on day one was a dogfish scoring 94 points, landed by local angler, Becky Lee. The day one flatfish prize went to Isle of Man angler, Andy Dugdale, with a nice plaice worth 56 points. Top angler on day one was Saul Page, with 22 fish for 568 points. Saul fished section D landing several plaice and dogfish. Second was Tom Wells with 17 fish, 456 points and Ian Dancy was third with 13 fish for 423 points. Altogether on day one 487 fish were recorded weighing 250lb 12oz.

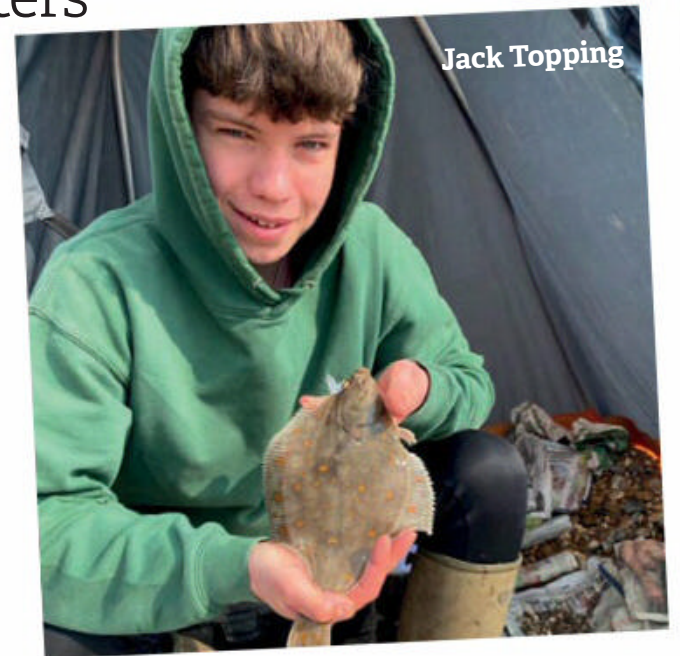
DAY TWO

Day two dawned to find the sun shining, wind dropping and the sea calming by the minute – perfect plaice conditions, and so it proved. Again, a slow start but as the tide started to build, plaice and dabs started to come ashore. I'm not sure whether it was fate, but I was pegged three away from Saul on day two, so after about an hour of scratching around for the odd fish, I looked

up and saw the tell-tale sign of a decent fish on, etched all over Saul's face. As he edged his way closer to the water, I picked up the camera and went over to see what was going on. The fish had dropped his line slack and gone down-tide, bringing Saul's neighbouring anglers' lines into play. Showing true sportsmanship everybody worked around the fish and the crossed lines as the fish made its last attempt to gain its freedom. A lovely 57cm (177 points) bass was expertly landed and it proved to really be a match winner. The look on Saul's face was a picture, he knew what it meant. As we walked back to his peg to measure and photograph the fish I said, 'look behind you'. Three anglers were untangling their lines, with not a crossed word, a thankful apology from Saul for all their help, everyone was just pleased to have been there. A quick photo and measure before the fish was released and the focused match face was back on, with still a few hours to go. Zone D was again top zone. Daz Newland from the Isle of Wight took top angler on day two with 18 fish for 452 points. Richard Yates was second, also in D with 14 fish for 400 points, closely followed by Saul, who won section A with 396 points finishing third overall on day two. It was no surprise Saul's bass took biggest fish on the day, with the flatfish prize being shared between Ben Richards and local angler Brett Cotter with a 56-point plaice apiece.

There were many fantastically talented match anglers fishing over the two days. Saul's performance was outstanding and I know just what it meant to him to win in Ian's memory. Congratulations to Saul for an outstanding performance with a perfect score of two points to become the first SAMF UK Ian Golds Masters champion. Congratulations also goes to Joe Plumstead (runner-up), Steve Swan (third place), and to all the other winners including Jack Topping (England Youth), who showed experience beyond his years. His rigs weren't catching so Jack decided to re-engineer his rigs on the beach which changed his fortunes significantly, nearly landing him a zone prize on day two, coming 5th with seven plaice. In total Day 2 produced 534 fish, weighing 255lb 0oz.

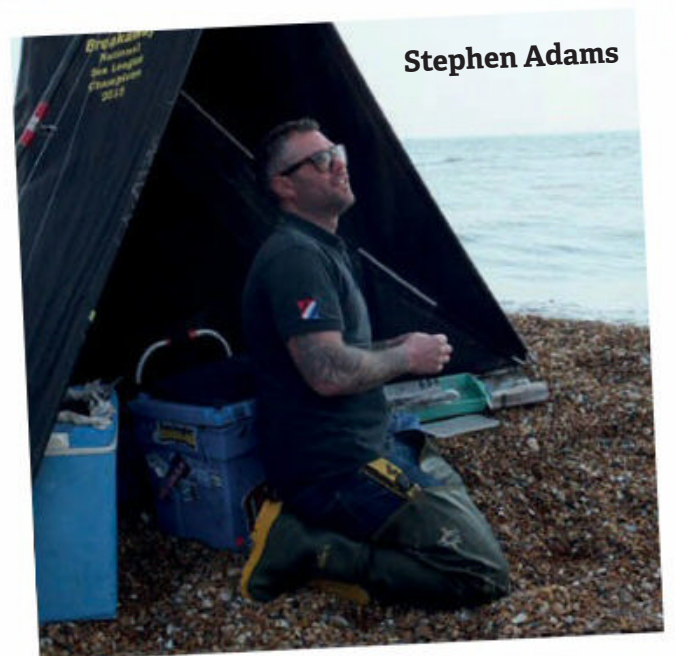
A full list of all the overall position, zones and mystery pairs is on the SAMF Facebook page. A massive thank you to all who helped make this a fantastic event. To all the anglers taking part, thanks for supporting SAMF and the event. Without you there wouldn't be a SAMF. ■



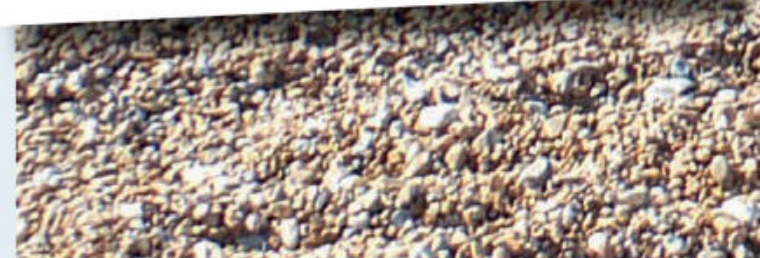
Jack Topping



Ian Bowell



Stephen Adams



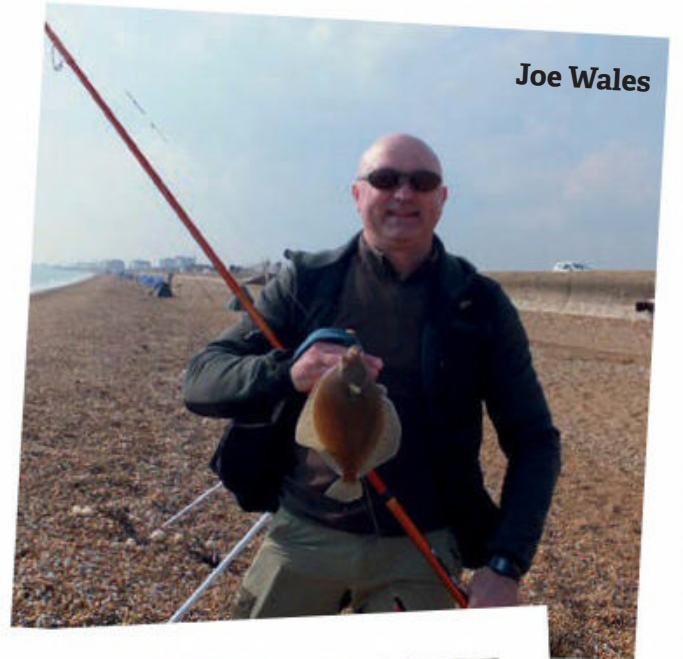
AL SAME MASTERS



Bob Gascoine



Saul's bass proved to be a match winner



Joe Wales



Champion Saul Page



Steve Swan placed third



SEA LEAGUE

The latest results from Britain's biggest event for shore match anglers

3: HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS AA TEAMS & OPEN

East Sussex, 38 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Shane Giles 5lb 10oz (3); 2nd Luke Mooring, Dover, 5lb 7oz (2); 3rd Rex Palmer, Hastings, 4lb 4oz (2).

3: KENT FLOUNDER LEAGUE ROUND 4 Allhallows, 34 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Lewis Clark Rochford 105cm (3); 2nd Pete Josh, Gillingham, 102cm (2); 3rd Trevor Back, Sheppey, 96cm (2).

3: EAST ANGLIA TEAMS OF FIVE AND OPEN, ROUND 5

East Lane, 64 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Steve Adams, Chelmondiston, 332 points (6); 2nd Alan Lewis, 303 points (Not registered); 3rd Dan Eagle, Leiston, 284 points, (4). Zone winners: Liam Roper, Aldeburgh (2), and Mark Ward, Ipswich (2). Biggest fish, Liam Roper with a thornback worth 230 points.

3: SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF SEA ANGLERS, ROUND 2

Riverside, 60 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Gav Owen, Consett, Zone C, 23 fish, 464 points (6); 2nd Steve Potts, Gosforth, Zone B, 14 fish, 235 points (5); 3rd Sandy Wason, Ayre, Zone A, 12 fish, 231 points (4). Longest fish, 35cm flounder, Chris Barrett (Not registered).

2: HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS AA REG WILLIS MEMORIAL OPEN, 18 anglers

Result: 1st Darren Bond, Lancing, 12lb 10z (1); 2nd Rex Palmer, 8lb 6oz.

1-2 MINEHEAD OPEN

Somerset, 64 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Julian Shambrook, Torquay, 2 points, 70 fish points (12); 2nd Saul Page, Deal, 3 points, 60 fish points (11); 3rd Chris Read, Cardiff, 4 points, 62 fish points (10); 4th Chris Equal, Cardiff, 4 points, 42 fish points (9); 5th Ben Bradstock, Honiton, 5 points, 46 fish points (8); 6th James Masden, Clevedon, 6 points, 54 fish points (7); 7th Aidan O'Halloran, Lisdodvarna, 6 points, 34 fish points (6); 8th Matt Werbitzsky, 7 points,

467 fish points (Not registered); 9th Dave Lane, Weymouth, 7 points, 32 fish points (4); 10th Rob Marshal, Taunton, 8 points, 44 fish points (3). Zone Winners: Joe Wales, Shoreham, (2), Richard Gormley, Courtown, (2). Biggest fish, Jason Brown, Bridgewater, 10lb 6oz thornback ray (2); Chris Jones, Porthcawl, 10lb 6oz bull huss (2).

26: SAMALITE CHESIL LEAGUE ROUND 3 OF 12

Bexington, 63 anglers

Bright sunshine and a fresh south-east breeze did create a swell, colouring the water along the edge. Fish were hard to find and A zone was very hard with only seven catching sizeable fish. B zone was far better with 19 anglers returning fish to the scales. Species caught included plaice, dab, grey gurnard and just one dogfish.

■ **Result:** 1st Daniel Crump Barry 2lb 10oz, 3 plaice, (6), 2nd James Lane, Weymouth, 2lb 9oz, 2 plaice (5) 3rd Phil Lee, Sussex, 2lb 7 1/2oz, 4 plaice, 1 grey gurnard (4). Zone A winner Nathan Elliot Dover 2lb 7oz, 2 plaice, 1 dab, including biggest fish, Plaice, 1lb 11 1/2oz, (2).

26: YORKSHIRE FSA WINTER LEAGUE ROUND 9 & OPEN,

Hornsea 40 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Ian Nelson, Grimsby, 5 fish, 330points (4); 2nd Mike Fox, 9 fish, 252 points (Not registered); 3rd Keith Mumby, Grimsby, 4 fish, 213 points (2). Biggest fish, Mike Moore, 51cm cod, 176 points (Not registered).

20: WELSH FSA EAST REGION SHORE LEAGUE ROUND TWO,

79 anglers

Weather conditions where near perfect other than a moderate easterly wind with 74 out 79 anglers catching fish totalling 161kgs and 10 different species: dogfish, bull huss, three-bearded rockling, pouting, conger eel, blonde/spotted/small eyed rays, poor cod and codling.

■ **Result:** 1st Mark Cowell, Llantwit Major, 10.68kgs (7): blonde ray of 7.8kg, the heaviest fish of the day, a small eyed ray and a dogfish; 2nd Dave Llewelyn, Barry,

9.08kg (6): four conger eels, three dogfish and a pouting; 3rd Shaun Moore, Cardiff, 6.79kg, (not registered): eight dogfish, three rockling and a spotted ray. Top five Individuals after two legs: 1st Adam Farmer with 194 fish points, accumulative weight 12.36kg; 2nd Shaun Moore with 193 fish points, accumulative weight 11.89kg; 3rd Gerald John with 192 fish points, accumulative weight 12.1kg; 4th Dean Downe with 184 fish points, accumulative weight 10.26kg; 5th Andrew Withey with 183 fish points, accumulative weight 9.26kg. Top five teams on the day: 1st Team Sakuma with 436 fish points, accumulative weight 23.8 kg, 14 team points; 2nd Reel Fishing with 391 fish points, accumulative weight 15.2 kg, 13 team points; 3rd South Wales Match Team with 388 fish points, accumulative weight 21.985kg, 13 team points; 4th Garry Evans Match Team with 360 fish points, accumulate weight 13.6kg, 11 team points; 5th Dave Richards Match Team with 336 fish points, accumulative weight 16.8kg, 10 team points. Top Five Teams after 2 legs: 1st Team Sukuma with 28 points; 2nd South Wales Match team with 25 points; 3rd Garry Evans Match team with 21 points (690.5 fish points); 4th Channel Anglers with 21 points (676.5 fish points); 5th Dave Richards Match Team with 19 points (660 fish points).

20: BRAAS OPEN

Pagham, 17 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Tony Chant, BRASS, 91 points (not registered); 2nd Stuart Donaldson, Pagham Yacht Club, 41 points (not registered); 3rd Tony Hiller, Pagham, 32 points (Not registered).

19-20: IAN GOLDS MEMORIAL SAMF MASTERS

Hythe, 104 anglers

■ **Result:** 1st Saul Page, Deal, 2 points (20); 2nd Joe Plumstead, Eastbourne, 4 points, 625 fish points (19); 3rd Steve Swan, Herne Bay, 4 points, 527 fish points (18); 4th Darren Newland, Ryde, 5 points 696 fish points (17); 5th Darren Bond, Lancing, 5 points, 670 fish points (16); 6th Rob Tuck, Holland on Sea, 5 points, 475 fish points (15); 7th Dave Shorthouse, Kettering, 6 points, 733 fish points (14); 8th Joe Wales, Shoreham, 6 points, 404 fish points (13); 9th Tom Wells, Deal, 7 points (12); 10th Richard Yates, St Margret's Bay, 8 points, 602 fish points (11). Zone winners: Day 1, Ian Dancy, Waterlooville, (2); Day 2, Brett Cotter, London (2). A full list of all the overall position, zones and mystery pairs is on the SAMF Facebook page.

REMINDER Penn Sea League entries will only be accepted from the match organiser or officials of the club concerned at least eight weeks in advance. If results are not returned to Sea Angler within a month of the event, the event will be declared void for Penn points.

LEADER BOARD UP TO 6TH APRIL 2022

PREMIER DIVISION

Saul Page	Deal	57
Joe Wales	Shoreham	50
Darren Bond	Lancing	40
Ben Bradstock	Honiton	34
Keith Smith	Blyth	30
Gary Medler	Great Yarmouth	29
Paul Smith	South Shields	29
Paul Whelan	Ballybrack	29
Ben Arnold	Brighton	27
Julian Shambrook	Torquay	24
Richard Yates	St Marg Bay	24
Andrew Dugdale	Peel	22
Steve Swan	Herne Bay	21
Darren Newland	Ryde	20
Joe Plumstead	Eastbourne	19
Philip A Lee	Sussex	18
Bill Lindfield	Greasby	17
Ben Price	Holyhead	16
James Madsen	Clevedon	16
Jane Cantwell	Ireland	16
Louie Smith	Deal	16
Phil Arliss	Filey	16
Mark Pinder	Ipswich	15
Rob Tuck	Holland on Sea	15
Andy Bates	Louth	14
Dave Shorthouse	Kettering	14
Simon Drayton	Gainsborough	14
Tom Wells	Deal	14
Chris Read	Cardiff	13
Fon Owen	Anglesey	13
Jimmy Price	Abergele	13
Paul Medd	Peterborough	13
Steve Gibson	Withernsea	13
Allan Beale	Middlesbrough	12
Brian Harland	Whitby	12
Colin Crosby	Hastings	12
N Charlesworth	Hornsea	12
Shane Russell	Old Colwyn	12
Chung Ho'Shing	Sheffield	11
Callum Richardson	Preston	10
Chris Isaac	Llanelli	10
Claire Loder	Cwmbran	10

Dave Chidzoy	Bridport	10
Matt Pitter	Southampton	10
Mike Larkin	Barrow	10
Nick Snow	Bristol	10
Sam Collier	Deal	10
Shaun Tucker	Swansea	10
Chris Equal	Cardiff	9
Gareth Griffiths	Bar in Furness	9
Mark Colman	Hornsea	9
Chris Horn	Kirkcaldy	8
Chris Jones	Porthcawl	8
Dan Mogridge	Portsmouth	8
Jason Brown	Bridgwater	8
Kevin Lewis	Dundee	8
Lloyd Summer	Bargoed	8
Mike Rose	3 Counties	8
Neil Cutler	Gateshead	8
Franco Attanasio	Saundersfoot	7
Mark Cowell	Llantwit Major	7
Paul Garbutt	Skelton	7
Paul Stanley	Bristol	7
Rich Hughes	Anglesey	7
Sandy Wason	Ayr	7
Aidan O'Halloran	Lisdoonvarna	6
Alan Price	Rhyl	6
Alby Allan	South Shore SAC	6
Brett Cotter	London	6
Brogan Bayford	Bristol	6
Daniel Crump	Barry	6
Dave Llewelyn	Barry	6
Gavin Owen	Consett	6
Gerald John	Caerphilly	6
Kris Lindsay	Holyhead	6
Malcolm Stote	Lymington	6
Steve Adams	Chelmondiston	6
Darren Jones	Rhyl	5
Dave Pinchbeck	Dartford	5
Fiachra Cronin	Tralee Bay	5
Graham Adams	Shotley	5
Ian Nelson	Grimsby	5
James Lane	Weymouth	5
Jim Morris	Chester	5
Lewis Clark	Rochford	5

Mark Rogers	Maidstone	5
Paul Stevens	Worthing	5
Steve Potts	Gosforth	5
Stuart Cresswell	Ayr	5
Daniel Eagle	Leiston	4
Dave Lane	Weymouth	4
Jason Banham	Ipswich	4
Mark Davies	Wrexham	4
Mark Griffen	Nantwich	4
Michael Cox	-	4
Tom Ryder	Worthing	4
Tony (Bob) Roberts	Holyhead	4
Adam Johnson	South Shields	3
Andy Reeves	Sheerness	3
Carl Champion	Swansea	3
Damien Evans	-	3
George Smith	Grimsby	3
Ian Dancey	Waterlooville	3
Jimmy Connell	Glasgow	3
Julian French	Brighton	3
Lee Smith	Hull	3
Neil Marsh	Herne Bay	3
Neil Wilkinson	Maryport	3
Nicky Robson	Wallsend	3
Rob Marshall	Taunton	3
Shane Giles	-	3
Simon Pattinson	Rosyth	3
Steve Smyth	Cardiff	3
Steven Bonner	Liverpool	3
Stuart Littlewood	Onchan	3
Adrian Cooper	Grimsby	2
Alan Harrison	Liverpool	2
Amy Tappenden	Rochford	2
Ben Stockley	-	2
Braydon Aldous	Ipswich	2
Chris O'Sullivan	Tralee	2
Chris Spall	Westleton	2
Ciaran Fogarty	Dunn Brinn	2
Colin Holmes	Arbroath	2
Darren Brooks	Hastings	2
Darren Stevens	Bristol	2
Dave Hutchinson	Blackpool	2
Dave Morrell	Colwyn Bay	2

Only those with
2 or more points
are listed

HOW IT WORKS

■ With £10,000 in tackle prizes spread over the two divisions, points, based on entries, are awarded to the top three, section winners and captors of the largest fish caught in each designated Penn match. Penn also awards a prize of a Spinfisher fixed-spool reel to the angler scoring the most points in matches shown in each issue. If there is a tie, the winner will be the angler whose total is from the greatest number of results and is then chosen on merit by the editor. An angler can win only one reel during the year. To win a prize you must be registered with the Penn Sea League – supply your name, address, phone and email. Send fixtures, results and league registration by email to Ian Bowell: ian.bowell@icloud.com



Penn Monthly
Winner for
March; Garry
Medler Great
Yarmouth
29 points

Your at-a-glance match events planner

● = Penn Sea League

● **21:** Maryport & District SAC Autumn Open, Heaviest Fish open. Fishing 10-2pm, Workington Jetty to Maryport South Pier. Pre book with David Underwood, tel: 01900 605765 or Jeff McAllister, 01900 870624

● **21:** Ipswich Sea Anglers Summer Open, River Alde
3-8pm £20 entry, SAMF weight measure, except whiting and bass 27cm, everything else over 18cm. Pre-book only Matt LF, tel: 07810564399, or Rob Tuck 07855848967

● **21-22:** Pairs Match, pairs fish together on a joint peg, Pwllheli beach. Fishing times 9:30-14:30 Saturday, 10:30-15:30pm Sunday. £60 per team for both days. Straight measure catch & release.
Pre-pay through PayPal to; danimmjones10@gmail.com
Contact Dave Cave 07939462350.

● **22:** Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers, round 3 Lunan, Max 50 Pegs, £15 Adults £5 Juniors. Contact Mike on 07933 003985 or Chris on 07872944807

● **22/5:** North-West Association of Sea Anglers, Rock Channel, Fishing 09.30-13.30pm. Book on 07.45-08.15am Kings Parade, near clown sculpture CH45 2PB. Pre booking essential. Tel: 07572593272

● **22:** SAMF GB Summer League, East Halton 9.30-1.30pm, meet 0830 to 0900, £20 all in straight measure everything counts pre book only 40 pegs, Brett 07834559265

● **28:** North Wales Teams of five and open; Pwllheli 4-8pm. Pre-book with Ben Price, tel: 07393201284 or email benplumb1992@gmail.com

PENN MA
21 MAY: M
Open, Morris
Contact Pa
tel: 085
or email pau
@gma

● **28:** Reelfun League and Open series, round 3, Littleton 5.30-9.30pm, catch and release, 1 rod, 3 hooks no bait bans, £50 for the seven matches, best 5 from 7, pay-out top 12, biggest flat, round and biggest bag, or £20 per match pre-book only contact Steve at Reelfun. Tel: 01275-848652
 ● **28:** Southern League round 5 of 12 & Open, Lee on Solent/Stokes. 8pm-1am, pegged, measure & return, undersize fish count as 1oz, £15 match entry, £5 pools, £10 pair, team of five free, 2022 League entry £25, booking ends one hour before start, book only. Tel: Darren 07919 073232, Mike 07983 579596, Ian 07736 004714 or Ant 07775 691916. Email Nick: southernleagueandopens@gmail.com
 ● **28:** Lincolnshire Open, Sandilands, 2-7pm, meet Sandilands golf course 2-3pm, pre book only, length to weight conversion, £15, optional £5 pool. Mark Taylor 07500112515 taylorplumbingandheating@hotmail.co.uk
 ● **28-29:** Preston two day open, 50 pegs, £45 Pre book only. Saturday 9-1pm Sunday 9.30-1.30pm. Contact Hutch, tel: 07472249294 or Tony 07702229015

JUNE

● **5:** Tralee Bay SAC County Kerry, Ireland, Cappalough 3-7pm Chris O'Sullivan, atlantictackle@hotmail.com
 ● **5:** Gerry's Sea League, Stanha. Pre book only £20 Fishing 1.15-5.15pm, book on at carpark from 11.30. Contact Hutch. Tel: 07472249294 or Tony 07702229015
 ● **5:** Reelfun League and Open series, round 4, Littleton 9.45-13.45pm, catch and

release, 1 rod, 3 hooks no bait bans, £50 for the seven matches, best 5 from 7, pay-out top 12, biggest flat, round and biggest bag, or £20 per match pre-book only contact Steve at Reelfun. Tel: 01275-848652

● **11:** Southern League round 6 of 12 & Open, Hayling, 7pm-midnight, pegged, measure & return, undersize fish count as 10z, £15 match entry, £5 pools, £10 pair, team of five free, 2022 League entry £25, booking ends one hour before start, book only,. Tel: Darren 07919 073232, Mike 07983 579596, Ian 07736 004714 or Ant 07775 691916. Email Nick: southernleagueandopens@gmail.com

● **12:** Anglers Corner 2022 West Wales National Sea League, North Channel, Bury Port 9-1pm. Meet Car Park by Shoreline Caravan Park 7am, pegged, zoned, length match, 1 rod, 3 Hooks. £20 entry, 100% cash paid Back, prizes for 1st, 2nd 3rd overall, zone winners and longest fish. Teams of 5 Entry is Free, no money paid in or out, just bragging rights and a Trophy to keep for the year as West Wales Champions. Tel: Christopher Isaac; 07880311014 or email c19aac@gmail.com

● **12:** Reelfun League and Open series, round 5, Littleton 4.45-8.45pm, catch and release, 1 rod, 3 hooks no bait bans, £50 for the seven matches, best 5 from 7, pay-out top 12, biggest flat, round and biggest bag, or £20 per match pre-book only. Contact Steve at Reelfun, tel: 01275-848652

● **12:** Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers, round 4 Riverside, Max 50 Pegs, £15 Adults £5 Juniors. Contact Mike on 07933 003985 or Chris on 07872944807

Got an event?
Contact us at the usual address
ian.bowell@icloud.com

MAY					
1	SUN	03.00	6.89	15.21	6.89
2	MON	03.33	7.11	15.53	6.90
3	TUE	04.06	7.15	16.24	6.84
4	WED	04.40	7.04	16.53	6.68
5	THU	05.12	6.80	17.22	6.45
6	FRI	05.45	6.51	17.52	6.21
7	SAT	06.19	6.23	18.27	5.98
8	SUN	07.00	5.97	19.10	5.72
9	MON	7.52	5.73	20.08	5.48
10	TUE	9.02	5.61	21.28	5.40
11	WED	10.26	5.78	23.03	5.68
12	THU	11.33	6.14	****	****
13	FRI	00.06	6.12	12.30	6.49
14	SAT	00.57	6.53	13.20	6.76
15	SUN	01.44	6.85	14.07	6.92
16	MON	02.28	7.09	14.52	7.00
17	TUE	03.12	7.25	15.36	7.00
18	WED	03.56	7.33	16.21	6.91
19	THU	04.42	7.28	17.05	6.72
20	FRI	05.29	7.11	17.51	6.47
21	SAT	06.20	6.85	18.40	6.22
22	SUN	07.18	6.58	19.39	6.01
23	MON	08.25	6.40	20.51	5.92
24	TUE	09.34	6.35	22.06	6.00
25	WED	10.43	6.40	23.16	6.19
26	THU	11.53	6.51	****	****
27	FRI	00.20	6.41	12.53	6.61
28	SAT	01.12	6.57	13.40	6.64
29	SUN	01.54	6.69	14.19	6.65
30	MON	02.31	6.81	14.54	6.68
31	TUE	03.07	6.92	15.26	6.72

JUNE					
1	WED	03.42	6.95	15.58	6.70
2	THU	04.18	6.86	16.30	6.59
3	FRI	04.51	6.68	17.02	6.43
4	SAT	05.26	6.49	17.35	6.27
5	SUN	06.02	6.32	18.11	6.10
6	MON	06.42	6.17	18.52	5.95
7	TUE	07.30	6.02	19.42	5.80
8	WED	08.27	5.93	20.43	5.72
9	THU	09.37	5.95	22.03	5.81
10	FRI	10.46	6.15	23.15	6.15
11	SAT	11.48	6.39	****	***
12	SUN	00.16	6.48	12.46	6.61
13	MON	01.11	6.79	13.41	6.77
14	TUE	02.03	7.04	14.32	6.86
15	WED	02.53	7.20	15.21	6.88
16	THU	03.43	7.28	16.10	6.85
17	FRI	04.33	7.28	16.58	6.77
18	SAT	05.25	7.19	17.46	6.65
19	SUN	06.17	7.01	18.36	6.50
20	MON	07.12	6.80	19.29	6.35
21	TUE	08.09	6.60	20.28	6.25
22	WED	09.08	6.45	21.30	6.20
23	THU	10.08	6.34	22.33	6.20
24	FRI	11.10	6.26	23.34	6.23
25	SAT	****	***	12.12	6.25
26	SUN	00.32	6.31	13.06	6.30
27	MON	01.22	6.45	13.51	6.39
28	TUE	02.06	6.59	14.30	6.49
29	WED	02.47	6.70	15.07	6.56
30	THU	03.26	6.74	15.42	6.59

Wick	-2.29	Swansea	+4.42
Lossiemouth	-2.00	Milford Haven	+4.37
Aberdeen	-0.18	Fishguard	+5.44
Stonehaven	-0.08	Aberystwyth	-6.11
Cockenzie	+0.47	Barmouth	-5.45
Berwick	+0.54	Holyhead	-3.28
Blyth	+1.46	Menai Bridge	-3.08
North Shields	+1.47	Colwyn Bay	-2.47
Hartlepool	+1.59	Southport	-2.55
Whitby	+2.20	Blackpool	-2.50
Scarborough	+2.30	Morecambe	-2.33
Filey Bay	+2.45	Barrow (Ramsden)	
Bridlington	+2.58		-2.28
Skegness	+4.29	Whitehaven	-2.30
Hunstanton	+4.44	Kirkcudbright Bay	
Cromer	+4.56		-2.25
Lowestoft	-4.23	Girvan	-1.51
Aldeburgh	-2.53	Ayr	-1.44
Felixstowe pier	-2.23	Lamlash	-1.45
Clacton	-2.00	Greenock	-1.19
Southend-on-Sea	-1.22	Oban	+4.12
Herne Bay	-1.24	Gairloch	+5.16
Margate	-1.52	Ullapool	+5.36
Deal	-2.38	Belfast	-2.47
Dover	-2.53	Douglas	-2.44
Dungeness	-3.05		
Eastbourne	-2.48	IRELAND	
Newhaven	-2.47	Dun Laoghaire	-2.09
Brighton	-2.51	Arklow	-4.41
Worthing	-2.36	Rosslare harbour	
Portsmouth	-2.29		+4.39
Ryde	-2.29	Baginbun Head	+3.53
Southampton *	-2.53	Ballycotton	+3.45
Poole (Entrance) *		Courtmacsherry	+3.32
-5.09		Baltimore	+3.35
Bournemouth *	-5.09	Bantry	+3.15
Swanage *	-5.19	Fenit pier	+3.13
Portland	+4.57	Kilrush	+4.02
Torquay	+4.40	Galway	+3.36
Dartmouth	+4.25	Clifden Bay	+3.41
Plymouth	+4.05	Westport Bay	+3.57
Fowey	+3.53	Sligo harbour	+4.25
Falmouth	+3.30	Killybegs	+4.21
Newquay	+3.32	Rathmullan	+4.43
Padstow	+3.45		
Barnstaple	+4.30	NORTHERN IRELAND	
Weston-super-Mare		Belfast	-2.47
+5.05		Portrush	+5.48
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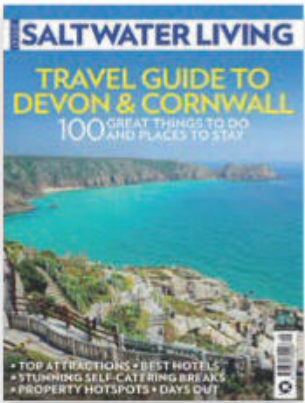


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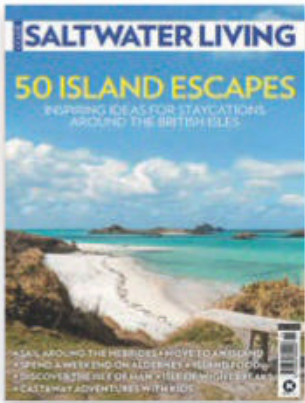
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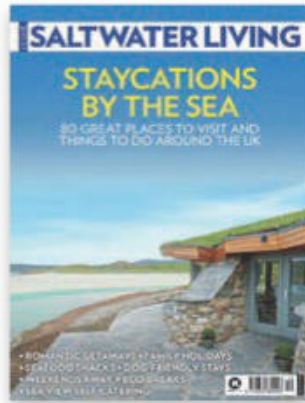
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A ROUGH GUIDE TO

HARD LURES

New to lure fishing and baffled by lure design and choice? Don't be. Dr Rob Pope and BASS members come to the rescue with a buyer's guide to hard lures



**YO-ZURI MAG
POPPER 105**

**YO-ZURI MAG
POPPER 105**

There has been an obvious increase in the number of people turning to angling for the first time, or returning after many years of absence as a consequence of the pandemic which has changed so much in the last 18 months or so. To a degree, this has been mirrored in the BASS membership. For many years, new BASS members tended to be anglers of some experience and very often, bass-specific at that. BASS now finds itself with a wider range of angling ability and experience amongst its members than perhaps ever before. With this in mind, it seems like the perfect time to offer some material aimed predominantly at those that are new to chasing bass. That said, the learning never stops in any form of angling so hopefully there is something for everybody.



**DAIWA
MORETHAN**

THE BASICS

Lures are very often split into three main categories: 'hard', 'soft' and 'metals'. Hard lures can then be broadly split into three categories depending on the approximate depth of water they travel in when retrieved. Surface lures, as the name implies, are retrieved on the surface of the water, shallow diving lures run from just sub-surface to two meters or so. The rest, often called deep diving, run deeper than that. This is a very general set of criteria that is very often used, but it is not perfect!

Surface lures can be made to go subsurface with certain rod movements and angles, and retrieval speeds and this presentation can catch bass no problem.

Similarly, subsurface lures that float can be retrieved so very slowly that they stay on the surface and again, this can catch fish. And then there are sinking shallow divers that run just subsurface until you stop the retrieve, at which point they will fall through the water column until you start reeling again. This period of non-retrieval, where the lure is sinking (sometimes referred to as 'the drop') can often elicit a take when a steady retrieve has failed. All that said, the point is that the three categories aren't perfect but suffice well enough and will help to start building an understanding of what lures can do and what they can't. This will in turn help select appropriately when buying and when deciding what to take-out fishing. That's the hope anyway! ▶



**A bass caught on
a shallow running
hard lure**



**ZENITH
Z-CLAW**

**IMA
KOMONO II**

SHALLOW RUNNING LURES RECOMMENDED BY BASS MEMBERS:

- Tackle House Feed Shallow 128 and 105
- IMA Komomo II
- IMA Nabarone 125F
- Duo Terrif DC-12 Type I
- Duo Tide Minnow range

I am an absolute sucker for a shallow running lure, particularly the smaller variety – less than 10cm sort of size (note - smaller lures are very often a good choice early in the season when bait is on the smaller side). There is no sane reason for this affliction, they have always just sung to me in their own way. I wouldn't dream of going bass fishing without a shallow running hard lure with me. In fact, the only time that I can remember doing so I unexpectedly ended up fishing some shallow reef whilst waiting for the tide to allow access to a deep and fast flowing section of estuary that was the main focus of my fishing. Such ground is not suited to shallow runners, hence their absence from my lure box. I then had to watch my companion for the session catch a good few bass on a Tackle House Feed Shallow whilst I couldn't elicit any interest no matter how I retrieved the lures I had with me that day. Lesson learned! One of the beauties of the shallow runners is that a straight retrieve is often as good as anything the lure can do! Just fast enough to get the lure working (wiggling in a swimming like motion) is a good place to start but mixing it all up is always worthwhile.

**TACKLE HOUSE
FEED SHALLOW
128**

A big problem for the beginner and experienced alike, is that there are thousands of lures available (chuck colours into the equation and its 100,000s, likely many more!). Although it sometimes feels like I have bought most of them, how many of the lures can I, or any other angler for that matter, say they have fished with to the point of being able to pass meaningful comment on? Not many I bet! Some people seem to think that catching a single fish on a lure is enough, but I think a lot more is required before earning endorsement. So, below you will find a short section on the three categories of hard lures and then some recommendations from BASS members who have used these lures and rate them highly. Some lures get recommended repeatedly, whereas others are a firm favourite of one angler and an item of disdain for another. For this reason, all the lures mentioned below have been recommended by multiple anglers. However, in my opinion there is a great amount of fun to be had in learning which works for you and at the places that you fish so do not exclude anything that isn't listed! Surface lures are very often a favourite with bass anglers. Watching a surface lure get nailed by a bass is more than a bit

SURFACE LURES RECOMMENDED BY BASS MEMBERS:

- Xorus Patchinko 125 and 140
- YoZuri Mag Popper 105
- Zenith/ Gan Craft Z Claw Original
- Phelps 85
- Lucky Craft Sammy 105
- Xorus Asturie 110

**TACKLE HOUSE
FEED SHALLOW
128**

DEEPER DIVING LURES RECOMMENDED BY BASS MEMBERS:

- Megabass Zonk.
- Deep diving Duo Tide Minnow range.

Deeper diving lures are not perhaps as commonly used as surface and shallow runners, but must not be ignored, especially if one will be fishing steep shelving beaches for example. Although there are many ways of approaching such a venue, a lure like the Megabass Zonk would be considered a good choice by many. The same principles regarding retrieves apply to these lures as the shallow runners but to avoid lure loses, you will always need to consider the depth of water carefully. Starting with a shallow runner and working down the water column is a good way to go if depth of water is unknown.

special, but visual excitement is only part of what makes surface lures popular. A surface lure can be fished over the sort of weed covered reef that would make fishing subsurface hard lures potential financial suicide! Also, some of the longest casting hard lures I know of are surface running so a few surface lures are well worth having in the lure box. How you fish a surface lure is an enormous subject in its own right but again, I think that working out what works is an enormous part of the fun. The good news is that just a straight retrieve can work and if you start to vary the speed at which the lure comes back, then the experimenting has already begun. Throw in a few pauses to allow the lure to sit still, and then start it moving again with a sharp tap on the rod to get a bit of splash and you can see how very soon various retrieves can be in the angler's repertoire. Experimenting to find what works is very often the key in all forms of lure fishing so always keep an open mind.

So, there we have it, a brief summary of how hard lures can be grouped, when to consider using each and some specific models that BASS members have used and done well fishing with. ■



■ Thanks to BASS for permission to use this article which first appeared in the BASS magazine.



A selection of Patchinko lures

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SALT XT BASS 11FT 6" 2-40Z 2PCS **£69.99**

SALT XT BASS 11FT 6" 2-40Z 3PCS **£89.99**

SALT XT MX OR FS 12FT 9" SURF 4-80Z 3PC **£94.99**

SALT XT MX OR FS 13FT 4 SURF 4-80Z 3PC **£99.99**

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**BUY WITH ANY NEW SALT XT ROD ABOVE GET
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PENN REELS BUILT TO LAST

**PENN RIVAL LONG CASTS
FROM £89.99**

Sealed against Salt water, 4+1 SS/ball bearings, 4.3-1 ratio - 6000, 7000, 8000

**PENN SURFBLASTER III FROM
£139.99**

7000&8000 - 1-mono, 1-braid spool, rubber braid ring! Slow Oscillation for Exceptional Line Lay, 4.7-1 ratio

**PENN SPINFISHER LONG
CASTS FROM £149.99**

5500LC, 6500LC, 7500LC - tough reel, sealed against the salt, strong all spools

**PENN BATTLE III LONG CAST
7000 £179.99**

6 S/S B/Bearings, CNC gear tech, HT-100 Carbon drag, Ratio 4.0-1, instant A/rev,

TEAM VASS PRO CLOTHING

TRIED & TESTED FROM A UK COMPANY!

**TEAM VASS 350 H/DUTY ROYAL BLUE/NAVY
SMOCK £79.99**

100% WATERPROOF, TOUGH LONG BODY, QUAD WELDED SEAMS, ELASTICATED CUFFS, HOOD, LARGE FRONT POCKET. PAIR WITH 350 NAVY BIB & BRACE **£59.99**

**TEAM VASS
175 WINTER LINED
BREATHABLE SMOCK
£109.99**

UNLINED LIGHTWEIGHT VERSION £69.99
IN RED/BLACK OR GREY/BLACK
100% WATERPROOF AND BREATHABLE WINTER QUILT LINED, TOUGH LONG BODY, QUAD WELDED SEAMS, ELASTICATED CUFFS, HOOD WITH PEAK, LARGE FRONT POCKET, AND HANDWARMER POCKETS

**TEAM VASS 175 WINTER LINED
BREATHABLE JACKET £129.99**

IN RED/BLACK OR GREY/BLACK
100% WATERPROOF AND BREATHABLE WINTER QUILT LINED, TOUGH LONG BODY, QUAD WELDED SEAMS, ELASTICATED CUFFS, HOOD WITH PEAK, 2X FRONT POCKETS, 2X INNER POCKETS

**TEAM VASS 175 WINTER LINED BREATHABLE
LINED WATERPROOF BIB & BRACE £89.99**

UNLINED LIGHTWEIGHT VERSION £69.99
BLACK OR KHAKI - ELASTICATED BRACES, WINTER QUILT LINED WILL PAIR WITH ANY VASS JACKET OR SMOCK!

**VASS 350 WINTER LINED
H/DUTY SMOCK £109.99 OR
JACKET £124.99**

THESE SOME OF THE TOUGHEST VASS SELL, WARM AS ITS WINTER LINED 100% WATERPROOF, WITH FLEECE LINED POCKETS AND ELASTICATED CUFFS

**PAIR WITH
VASS 350 WINTER LINED BIB & BRACE £89.99**
SAME AS 350 TOPS, VERY TOUGH 100% WATERPROOF, WINTER LINED

NEW PENN LUGGAGE

TOUGH, EASY KEEP CLEAN, SALT WATER PROTECTED ZIPS, LOOKS GREAT!

**BUY ANY 2 ITEMS OVER THE PHONE GET
10% OFF! TO £BUY ANY 2 ITEMS GET 10%
OFF OVER THE PHONE OR ONLINE!**

REEL CASE £19.99

for most F/S, 2 x multi, or bits

SPOOLS CASE £16.99

takes 3x8000 size spools
21x8.8cm

COOL BAGS

• Medium size: 27x15x12 cm **£26.99**

• Large size: 37x17x28 cm **£35.99**

WAIST BELT BAG PERFECT FOR WADING! £29.99

pliers, lures etc, 28x18x10cm

RIG WALLET LARGE £38.99

- Best on the market!
- Velcro secured
- Including 12 removable wallets (26x20 cm)
- Self-sealing zip sliders

BOAT BAG FOLDABLE £44.99

- Strong adjustable shoulder strap
- Carry handles on the sides
- 100% waterproof design
- Measuring tape on top

RIG STATION (FOR SERIOUS ANGLERS) £54.99

- 600D Polyester hard case
- 3 small tackleboxes included
- 6 large EVA rig winders included
- Comfortable EVA carry handle
- 33x20x9 cm

PILK & JIG BAG £54.99

takes up to 30 jigs, big plugs etc. without tangling, brilliant 25x20x22cm

ROLL UP CARRY BAG £54.99

- Ideal for clothing, camera, etc
- PVC Tarpaulin waterproof material
- 40L size • 59x27x43 cm

ROD BAG £72.99

2 different lengths; 3 pc 155 cm rods to 450cm and 165 cm for 480cm rods. The reinforced inside contains 4 Velcro straps secure rods during transport & external pockets on both sides to bring both an umbrella/shelter or tripod.

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